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THE
EMPIRE OF THE NAIRS;
OR, THE
RIGHTS OF WOMEN.

*The German Edition of this Work, under the
title of*

**Das Reich der Nairen, oder das Para-
dies der Liebe,**

Is sold by UNGER at Berlin, and by his Correspondents
at Francfort and Leipsic.



L' Edition Française, sous le titre de

**L'EMPIRE DES NAIRS, OU LE PARADIS
DE L'AMOUR,**

se trouve à

Francfort, chez J. D. SIMON.

Leipsic, — GRIESHAMMER.

Hambourg, — PERTHES.

Paris, — LES MARCHANDS DES NOUVEAUTÉS.

THE
EMPIRE OF THE NAIRS;
OR, THE
RIGHTS OF WOMEN.

AN
UTOPIAN ROMANCE,
In Twelve Books.

BY JAMES LAWRENCE,

AUTHOR OF

“THE BOSOM FRIEND,” “LOVE, AN ALLEGORY,”
ETC.

Genus huic materna superbum
Nobilitas dabat, incertum de patre ferebat.
VIRG. ix. 341.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

Second Edition.

London :

PRINTED FOR T. HOOKHAM, JUN. AND E. T. HOOKHAM,
NO. 15, OLD BOND STREET.

1813.

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L43e
1843
V.4

Vigurs, Printer, 14, York Street,
Covent Garden, London.

X 823
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1813
v. 4

BOOK X.

ARGUMENT.

THE second expedition of the Nairs against Kandahar saves the life of De Grey---The eunuch Selim stabbed by Roxana---Amours of Lacy and the sultana Fatima---The adventures of Hugh Lacy, Earl of Hereford---his irregularity at school and college---his friendship with Fitz-Allan---The Welsh history, or sorrows of Owen Tudor and Winifred Morgan---Frederic the Great---Tribunal of chastity at Vienna---Lacy's gallantries in Germany, Italy, Sicily, and Russia---he forfeits his rank and fortune---The soul-sellers in Holland His shipwreck on the coast of Malabar---his voyage with Agalva---their detention at Kandahar.

THE
EMPIRE OF THE NAIRS.

BOOK X.

THE ensuing day was a festival for all Calicut; before the sun appeared in the east, the whole town was in motion; the avenues could scarcely admit the crowds that hurried from the neighboring provinces: it was the day so impatiently desired—how cruelly slow had passed the intervening moments. The Nairs were in such rapture at the idea of doing homage to the mother of their future rulers in the daughter of their ancient princesses, that

it seemed a delusion which might vanish like the baseless fabric of a vision. The artillery on the surrounding hills were ready to announce the event.

The Samorin and the Princes of the empire, the Grand Master and the Knights of the Phoenix, the Heralds in their robes of ceremony, and the whole court had assembled in the maternal hall; the king of arms summoned the daughter of Agalva to appear, but the daughter of Agalva answered not.

A deputation of princes were sent to summon her; they found her in her own apartment: she sat, in meditation, under the portrait of her ancestress Mirva Ridaxina, the spirited paramour of the illustrious Mador.

The daughter of Ridaxa flourished four centuries before, in the days of ancient chivalry; but her merit lived in the memory of the Nairs; her matriotism was recorded in every story-book and extolled in every nursery in Indostan. Her por-

trait was preserved in the imperial palace, and over it hung the eventful bow.

“ Believe ye,” cried the young Samorina to the princes, “ that I really am the descendant of Mirva ? ”

“ Princess,” answered they, “ we summon you as such to receive our homage.”

“ Are ye content that this frame only should proceed from hers ?—no, ye shall find that I have inherited her soul.”

And Osva followed the princes, and, having described the situation of her countrywoman, thus addressed the assembly :

“ Last night, having reflected on her misfortunes, I retired to my couch ; but repose abandoned my pillow, the portrait of Mirva turned indignantly from me, and the string of the bow burst asunder. I started—it was a mere dream. But would not Mirva have scorned a descendant, whose vanity could detain, in useless carousals, all the heroes of the east, while a helpless countrywoman were

mourning in captivity? Who among you will declare himself her champion? This Englishwoman must share my satisfaction and grace your triumph."

She said; a thousand swords darted from their scabbards, the ground was covered with a thousand gauntlets.

"Go," cried the Samorin to his nephew, "may this absence be as successful as your last; may it restore some lost sister, some disconsolate mother to the bosom of her family! O Firnos, if your mother were among us, how happy we should be."

The Inauguration was deferred, and the heroes of Indostan being uncumbered by families, and free from domestic concerns, this project, like an autumnal blast, drove every hardy adventurer to the Persian frontiers, and warriors, numberless as the leaves of the forest, covered the banks of the Indus.

Attended by their devoted retainers, twelve princes of the empire joined this congress of heroes. Fired by their here-

ditary hatred against the Mahometans, their vassals had struck their tents and waited the signal of departure. The solar ray played on their burnished arms, and the wind whistled in their undulating banners. The Grand Master had summoned to the field all his knights, the sworn defenders of female liberty. The flower of the nobility, consisting of fifteen hundred gentlemen, each descended from four noble mothers, paid willing obedience to the summons of their chief. The embroidered phoenix on their breast distinguished them from their less noble companions.

At length the army perceived, by the light of the moon, the towers of the seraglio: they had arrived by forced marches, in order to surprise the place during the absence of the Sultan. The young Shah, whom a revolution had lately replaced on the throne of Ispahan, but to whom no power in nature could restore the eyesight, of which the jealousy of his own

brother had deprived him, was desirous of the alliance of Kandahar, and the Sultan, having torn one of his sisters from the body of her murdered husband, whom he before had obliged her to accept, had invited the Shah to the frontiers of their dominions, in order to bury this victim of their ambition in the arms of a blind and disgusting voluptuary.

Who could describe the indignation of the Nair army at the sight of a seraglio? the sight of the bastille would not have filled a Briton with greater wrath. The pedestrian, breathing vengeance, knitted his brows and vented an oath of abhorrence, and the knight clapped spurs to his animated steed.

The army had now surrounded the seraglio; it seemed a town in itself; every avenue was beset, when a slave, charged with dispatches from the Sultan, was conducted trembling before the young Prince. The following letters were found in the folds of his turban.

The Sultan of Kandahar to Selim, henceforth Chief Eunuch.

“ I confide into thy hands a rod of iron; I confer upon thee a power without bounds : cominand in the seraglio with the same power as myself; fear and punishment mark thy passage from apartment to apartment; question all the seraglio ; begin with the slaves, put them to the torture, spare not even my beloved. Thy head shall answer for all their faults, for I subject them all to thy inexorable tribunal, and constitute thee minister of my vengeance, at present my only passion. Assume thy new authority, but without pity, without feeling. I have written to my women to obey thee blindly ; confusion seize the guilty in thy sight. I suspect the letter to belong to Zelis ; examine her with the eyes of a lynx.”

The Sultan to his wives and the women of his harem.

“ Be this a thunderbolt falling amid the

horrors of a storm! Selim is your chief eunuch, though not to guard you, but to punish you: let the whole harem prostrate itself before him; he is the judge of your past and of your future conduct; his severe yoke shall make you regret your liberty, if you regret not your virtue.*”

“And is virtue so familiar to a tyrant?” cried Firnos,” can the name of liberty be so prostituted? No, ye injured females, the reign of your oppressors is over; the hour of your vengeance is nigh: I’ll die a rod in their corrupted blood; not one of them shall remain to tremble at the remembrance of our wrath.”

The slave cast himself at the Prince’s feet, and offered to conduct a chosen band by a secret way into the seraglio: his proposal was accepted, and, before midnight, Firnos and the principal warriors were within its terrific walls.

* Montesquieu’s Persian Letters.

They first directed their silent steps to the cell of the chief eunuch—unhappy favorite! destined to be cut off, in his ambitious career, in the moment of the accomplishment of all his vows. They searched his cell in vain, they found him not; but a packet of letters, containing his correspondence with his master, fell into their hands.

Copy of a letter to the Sublime Sultan my master.

“ Things are come to such a pass, that I tremble at the recital myself. Thy women imagine that thy absence confers impunity on them.

“ Zelis, in going to the mosque the other day, let fall her veil, and appeared with her face almost entirely naked before all the people.

“ I have catched Zashi in bed with one of her women, a thing so strictly forbidden by the rules of the harem.

“ By the merest chance in the world

I have found the letter, which I enclose; I cannot discover to whom it is directed.

“ Yesterday morning a young man was seen in the garden, but he escaped over the wall.

“ Without doubt many crimes remain undiscovered; but permit me, magnificent Sultan, to mention the source of these disorders—it is in thy own heart and in thy tender regard for thy women. If thou restrained not my hand; if, instead of remonstrance, I might use chastisement; if, instead of suffering thyself to be softened by their tears and complaints, thou sentest them back to weep before me, whom nothing softens, I would soon break them in; I would subdue their rebellious and independent spirit; in a week I would re-establish order.

“ Of all thy women, Roxana alone remains dutiful and obedient, and, like the turtle-dove, laments the absence of her lord. Unless I am invested with full au-

thority, I will answer for none of the others, but shall have every day greater horrors to report."

*To the Sublime Sultan, from the unhappy
Roxana, his slave.*

"Fear and trembling reign in thy harem ; thy palace is the house of mourning ; it is silent as the grave, or its walls re-echo only to our plaints ; it is the den of the tyger, who every instant seizes a fresh victim. He has put to the torture two white eunuchs, who could confess nothing but their innocence ; he has sold a number of our women, and obliged us to change the rest among ourselves. Zashi and Zelis have, in the silence of the night, received in their own apartments a treatment unworthy of them ; the vile wretch has dared to lay his sacrilegious hands upon them ; he keeps them still locked in their chambers ; and, though we are alone, he obliges us to wear our veils. He will not allow us to speak to each other ; it would

be a crime to write ; we have nothing free but our tears. A herd of new eunuchs have entered the harem ; they beset us day and night ; our very sleep is interrupted by their real or feigned suspicions. My only consolation is, that this will not last long ; my torments will end with my life ; it is hastening to its term. Cruel Sultan ! my death will not allow thee the time to put a stop to these outrages !”

The slave directed the knights to Roxana's apartments ; they found the unhappy fair just finishing a letter to her absent tyrant. Frenzy was in her look, her dishevelled hair flowed down her heaving bosom ; a bowl of poison stood before her ; the eunuch, weltering in his blood, lay at her feet. At their approach she started, and with a menacing air brandished the bloody dagger.

“ Unhappy sultana !” said Firnos, “ this title degrades you now for the

last time: mistake not your friends for your enemies; we, the knights of the phoenix, the sworn defenders of the rights of women, proclaim you free, and under the protection of our order."

Roxana, however, discovered no symptoms of joy; she regarded the knights with a mournful silence, and suffered the Prince to read the following letter, which lay open on the table.

"Yes, I deceived thee; I suborned thy eunuchs; I have sported with thy jealousy; I contrived to convert thy horrible harem into the seat of joy and pleasure. In a few moments I shall cease to live: the poison will circulate in these veins. But what should I do here? the only man who endeared life to me, is not more! But my spirit escapes well accompanied: I have sent before me the sacrilegious wretch, who has delivered my beloved to his tormentors. Couldst thou imagine me credulous enough to consider myself created to adore thy caprices?"

that thou, while indulging all thy desires, wert authorised to constrain mine? I reformed thy laws after those of nature; my spirit was always independent. Thou shouldst be thankful to me for the sacrifice that I made, in demeaning myself so far as to appear faithful; that I basely kept within my own breast those sentiments that I should have discovered to the whole world; in a word, that I profaned virtue, in suffering that a submission to thy whims should pass under its name."

"Think me not unworthy of your protection," said Roxana, recovering from her stupor, "though the warmth of my thanks equal not the value of your gifts. Life and liberty were indeed invaluable, but they arrive too late; I had a lover, dearer to me than either; I had already revenged, and now I can only lament his death. Behold that wretch! once my sole pleasure was in deceiving him; my behavior was so submissive and obedient, that, to my shame be it acknow-

ledged, it even received his approbation and praise; but I could not bear to see him, in the wantonness of power, ill-treating the other women in the harem, and my pity exceeding my prudence, I wrote an account of his cruelties to the Sultan. This letter he intercepted, and from that moment his spies never turned their eyes off me. Last night a man was discovered in my apartment; he was the beloved of my heart; he knew how to value our sex; he was from Europe, from a land where the women are free."

Firnos was puzzling himself what country in Europe could merit that description; when a confused noise was heard, and a party of Nairs brought in a man, who would have seemed more dead than alive, had he not cried—"She lives! Roxana lives!" and fainted on the cushions. He was stripped to the skin, which was cruelly lacerated by the scourge; his wrists and ankles were still red from his chains,

and the soles of his feet swelled from the bastinado.

Roxana was in a delirium of joy ; she hung over her lover, incapable of assisting in his cure. Fornos also was recollecting his features ; when he opened his eyes. “ Fornos !” he cried, “ good heaven ! where am I ?” He fainted again. Yes, it was De Grey !—and when he recovered his senses, what could surpass his transports, or those of Fornos and Roxana.

De Grey, having gathered every necessary information at Rome from the Knight of Malta *, had proceeded to Bagdad ; but his sister had changed her master, he traced her to Persia, but all his inquiries at Ispahan were fruitless : at length he discovered that an European woman was in the harem of the Sultan of Kandahar, and in order to acquire

* Vol. ii. book vi, page 207.

some insight there, he had resolved on the dangerous expedient of an amour with a sultana; and this, though at first only an intrigue of policy, the uncommon qualities of Roxana had turned into a real inclination.

“Courage,” said he, when he heard the cause of the Nair expedition; “I hail the good omen; it must be so. It is my sister! it is Emma de Grey! I have not seen her. But it would be an intolerable disappointment had chance brought us together so singularly in the cause of a stranger.”

He rose, and would lead the search, but his mangled feet cannot support him, his strength fails, and he sinks in the arms of Roxana.

Meanwhile the sun had peeped over the high hills of the seraglio, and discovered its dismal courts and dreary gardens; every building seemed a prison. They were styled the Palaces of Delight, and were the houses of bondage; nothing

within breathed the air of liberty, every window was secured, and love beat his wings in vain against the relentless bars.

The walks were formal and uniform; every shrub, modelled by art, had lost the luxuriance of nature; no tree reached its full growth; no birds delighted in its clipped branches, which afforded no retirement from the curiosity of the eunuchs, and a sparing shade from the rays of the sun. Here was no roaring cascade, darting its white foam from rock to rock, —no serpentine river, pouring its silver stream along the vale. But the corrupted taste of despotism, which would submit every gift of nature, nay, the very elements, to the same rod and line, had placed, at measured distances, its puerile fountains, which ever and anon, at the command of some favorite sultana, spirted in the air.

Meanwhile the slaves of the palace have laid down their arms, and implore the mercy of the conquerors. Few only have

fallen in the fray, and lie weltering in their blood. Firnos leads the knights to the dormitories of the harem—the eunuchs have concealed themselves; the warriors knock at the door in vain; at the clang of arms, the beauties lie trembling in their beds; the doors are burst, the knights enter these long galleries, where the victims of Mahometan jealousy are, perhaps, happy in their dreams. A uniform row of beds were placed on each side, and gave them rather the appearance of a hospital; every sixth bed contained a matron, to watch over the conduct, and to prevent any intercourse between her young neighbors.

But this restraint has ceased to be necessary. Who can paint their joy at this revolution?—they are requested—how gracious the expression (before they were always commanded) to assemble in the garden. Seven hundred women, wives, concubines, and slaves, obey the summons; they pass under the

standard of the phoenix, and are proclaimed free.

Meanwhile a female makes a sign to some of the knights ; they follow, without inquiring why or whither : she leads them to the chambers of punishment ; the iron door creaks upon its hinges ; hunger and solitude reign here. The windows are high, and above the reach of curiosity ; they afford no resort to the ennui within ; the light of the day peeps dismally through the close bars, scarce a ray falls on the sentences of gloomy morality inscribed on the walls. Though few of the sultanas, confined here at times for any trivial offences, can read at all, these principles are calculated to extinguish the last spark of female spirit.

The knights burn with indignation at the following inscriptions :

“ God said unto Mahomet,—‘ Keep thy women waiting for thy embraces. Resort to her that pleaseth thee the most, and when thou feelest thyself dis-

posed ; nor needest thou make a peace-offering to thy other wives, whom thou neglectest. This treatment will keep them in good humor, and cheerful and contented with what thou vouchest safe to bestow upon them.’

“ ‘Your women are your fields, you may sow your women how and where ye please.’

“ Know, God the Almighty created woman for the convenience and bane of man : the Prophet sayeth, ‘No greater evil will I leave unto the men, than their women.’ And a wiseman said, ‘I let my daughters hunger, that they may not grow proud ; I let them go naked, that they may not go abroad.’

“ Aristotle saw a troop of women pass by, and he spake unto his disciples :—‘Lo, the angels of death.’ ”

The knights had scarcely cast their eyes over these maxims of Mahometan policy, when the fair prisoners drew aside their attention. Their release was so

little expected, that some of them were naked as at their birth ; but how different, among the daughters of Eve, are the ideas on decency and modesty ! those who, at the moment, could not seize their veils, covered their faces with their hands, and exposed, without regret, those beauties which the Venus of Medici is so anxious to conceal.

Zashi and Zelis are released from their confinement. Zelis has already torn her veil into a thousand pieces : the knight, who released her, has not time to stop her hand ; he had wished to wear the veil as a sword-knot—the trophy of his success. But the Englishwoman is missing ; all inquiries are vain—she has not been seen for some days. Several of the eunuchs are dragged from their hiding-places ; but neither threats nor promises can bring any thing to light. Selim, the chief eunuch, alone might have given this information, but death has sealed his lips. Every corner of the seraglio has been

examined. De Grey loses all patience ; he cannot assist in the search—Roxana can afford him no consolation.

Had the army of any other nation taken a harem by storm, the licentious soldiery, emancipated from their usual privations at home, would have disgraced the ensuing night with scenes of the grossest debauchery ; not so the Nairs. If some of the subalterns sought the favors of the beauties whom they had delivered, none of them abused their victory with acts of indelicacy or violence ; and as the knights of the phœnix, and the other chieftains, were accustomed from their earliest youth to a free intercourse with the most accomplished and enlightened of the other sex, few of them felt any sentiment but that of pity for the puppets of a harem : with an air of goodness they promised them their protection, and detailed to them the happiness that awaited them in Indostan, where a smiling cottage

would be built for each, at the expence of the nation. What a delightful prospect to a woman who had either been bought at the slave-market, or presented to the Sultan as the tribute of a conquered province. She renounced the mock honors of a sultana, to become the free mother of a happy race of peasants.

Firnos, who had been relating to De Grey the discovery of Osva, and flattering him with the hopes of discovering his sister also, had left him with Roxana, and was walking solitary in the garden.

He chose a remote walk, far from the sounds of music, for gaiety reigned in the whole palace. Nothing interrupts his meditation; nothing moves around him but his own shadow; no sound is heard but his own sighs, for sometimes a sigh escaped him—he thought on his mother.

At length he hears some footsteps approaching, and a figure passes the bench where he sat, and, as he thought, a light

glimmered from beneath its clothes. The mystery of a dark lantern is enough to raise his curiosity—he follows it.

It led to an ivy-mantled tower at the bottom of the garden: the moon shone through its ruin; the owl might have nestled there, for it seemed not the dwelling of man. The figure pushed back the worm-eaten door and entered; the Prince, at a distance, entered after. The figure had already half mounted the winding stairs, but the loose stones, which with a hollow echo rolled down from step to step, announced the way that it had taken. The Prince mounts the stairs; he is now in total darkness; now a small window in the wall admits a ray of moonlight through its iron bars. Again he is in darkness; he is in danger of falling, but catches a rope, which, instead of a balluster, passes on one side. He follows the rope, ignorant where it may lead him; he reaches the top of the stairs; a gallery succeeds, he perceives the figure

at the end. It had placed the lantern on the ground, and was opening the last padlock, which secured a huge iron door. The Prince had just time to discover that it was a female: she enters, and he hears her locking the door with all care on the other side.

The Prince remains without a ray of light: he had advanced to the middle of the gallery; he can neither proceed nor retire; he has lost hold of the rope. He had perceived frequent holes in the floor; some of the planks had been removed, and he might have plunged into eternity. Shivering in the cold, he must wait the return of day; when again he hears the key turn in the lock: "Wait but a moment," cried a voice, "my light is gone out: your Fatima is as impatient as yourself:" and some one, as he conjectured the same figure, feeling her way along the gallery, passed him and descended the stairs.

Fatima, as he recollected, was the mo-

ther of the Sultan. She governed her son, and was the soul of every intrigue in the seraglio. He flattered himself that this adventure might lead to some important discovery; perhaps even Emma de Grey might be confined in this tower.

At the risk of his life, he gropes his way toward the iron door, with his sword he feels every step before him—he enters it. The windows here were large, though barred also with iron; and the moon, now in its full splendor, discovered, to his surprise, the convenient furniture of the apartment. But he hears the footsteps of the sultana, and conceals himself behind the curtain of a window.

Fatima enters, and locks the door of the apartment; she then approaches the table, and lights the candles. The Prince's curiosity increases at seeing the table spread with refreshments, served up in silver, and a bottle of wine between two goblets of gold.

The sultana pushes back the bolts of

an interior door ; it opens, and a man, in the habit of a slave, and with fetters on his legs, darts into her arms. His figure was manly ; his features, though irregular, were agreeable, and there was a frankness in his countenance more prepossessing than beauty ; but, perhaps, a long confinement had faded his color, and had proved more fatal to his appearance than the number of his years ; he seemed to have passed his fortieth. He behaved with a confidence uncommon in a slave, and, notwithstanding the meanness of his habit, his manners discovered the ease and dignity of a superior station.

“ Ah ! Sultana !” cried he, “ how impatiently have I waited your return ! Are you come at length to announce my freedom ? to loosen my chains ?”

“ I am come,” answered Fatima, “ to soften the rigor of your confinement—to procure you every comfort—to console you—to give you every proof of my tenderness and love !” She says, and

leads him to a purple sofa ; but though one of the finest women in Persia invites him to partake of the banquet, helps him to every delicacy, and presents to him the golden goblet, he seems lost in a reverie—she strives in vain to dissipate his melancholy, he sighs from the bottom of his heart—“ And shall then my captivity last for ever ? Shall I never leave these walls ? O that I were the only victim ! your caresses then might lighten my chains ; but the liberty, perhaps the life, of another person depends upon mine—of one, every moment of whose existence is of more importance than whole years of mine. She was my friend, my patroness ; and yet I am doomed never to learn her fate ! Has the Sultan consented that my affair be referred to the English consul ? ”

Fatima.

My dear Lacy, after the many proofs that I have given, you cannot doubt my affection. You may confide to me

who and what you are. Hear me to the end, Lacy; interrupt me not: I represented your case to my son; but he even doubts of your being an Englishman. On your arrival here you passed as a Mussulman, nor declared your nation till under arrest. He calls your reclamation a miserable evasion—"Tell me, my dear mother," said he, "what reason have you to think him an European? has he ever related to you any circumstances of his family, any incidents of his life? has he informed you why he left his natal country?" What answer could I give? you have refused so often to gratify my curiosity."

Firnos had redoubled his attention at the name Lacy. Such was the name of the Englishman who had accompanied his mother on her fatal voyage; he flatters himself that it is the same. Perhaps too the patroness, whose fate he laments, is Agalva herself: he knows not what to hope or fear, but has the pre-

caution not to discover himself. Lacy thus answers the Sultana :—

“ Well, then, I will gratify your curiosity, though the remembrance of what I was, and what I ought to be, should cause all my wounds to bleed a-fresh; but to you, born and educated in a harem, and unacquainted with the manners and opinions of Europe, how much of my history will be unintelligible !”

Fatima.

By no means—you forget that my mother was a Venetian, and never renounced the hopes of escaping to Europe; she had been a great traveller, and endeavored to give me an idea of the different countries that she had seen.

Lacy.

On the death of my father, the Earl of Hereford, I succeeded to the English peerage; I was then a boy at Westminster-school. I never troubled the Muses, or advanced farther than nonsense-verses; but as I had plenty of rolls and but-

ter, and tea and sugar, at command, I never wanted a friend who was a better poet than myself, and always contrived to produce a tolerable composition to my tutor. In all bodily exercises I made a better figure : few officers of the guards could beat me at billiards or tennis ; and, when I played, the cricket-ground was full of ladies. But what a blockhead I am, you are a Persian, and know not what cricket or billiards or nonsense-verses are, and it will not be worth while to explain them. I will proceed to my love adventures, which will amuse you better ; meanwhile, please to recollect that I was Earl of Hereford, and one of the handsomest boys at the school. With what satisfaction I used to strut up and down Bond-street ?

“ But why should I ennui you with my low intrigues and illiberal adventures ? At fifteen, I honored with my presence the nuptials of a dairy-maid, who gave her hand to our gardener, and stood

god-father to their heir-apparent; and one night, having made a libation to Bacchus, I accompanied to her conscious-bower a fair cyprian, but found myself, next morning, in the arms of a sable venus, who, though she might have been a princess of the blood on the banks of the Niger, was a very ill-sorted paramour for a British peer. The recital of such ignoble anecdotes would only offend your delicacy, and wound my self-love. Our Englishwomen of quality are the most virtuous women in the world; but one consequence of their virtue is, that our young men of fashion prefer the ease of a tavern to the stiff formality of a drawing-room; nor is it to be attributed to his want of taste, if a young gentleman take a street-pacing harlot for his first love*.

“ I was placed at an English university, when, once in a drunken frolic with some

* Cowper's Tirocinium, or Review of Schools.

gownsmen, I was discovered heaving one of those wretched beings, in a basket, into our college-window; the poor girl was sent to bridewell, and myself rusticated as ringleader.

“ My guardian thought that I had got into scrapes enough at home, and sent me to expose myself abroad; I was packed off to the University at Leipsic. Here I commenced blood; wore a cocked hat half-a-yard high, a queue that I could have put into my coat-pocket, and a pair of boots like oyster-barrels. I fought half a dozen duels with a broadsword, I could drink beer for a wager with any Westphalian, and prided myself on smoking till the tobacco extinguished the lights.

“ Such was my life at this seminary of education, when one of our young countymen arrived there. The Germans agreed that Fitz-Allan was one of the most elegant Englishmen that ever studied there. The French students declared

that he must at least have visited Paris. He paid me a visit on his arrival, and had too much good breeding to show the contempt that he must have felt for me. The professors were always comparing our conduct to my disadvantage; but I cursed the professors and him too, and held him too cheap, as a frenchified puppy, to bear him any grudge. We seldom met; he was figuring in the first circles, and I was squiring a little wench, who was bed-maker in my lodging-house, to the beer-houses and dancing-rooms in the neighborhood; for the Earl of Hereford had become the successful rival of a journeyman shoe-maker.

“My little wench had a sister, who was chambermaid to a professor’s daughter; I had the good fortune to discover, by her means, that a plot was going forward in the professor’s house to catch Fitz-Allan with the daughter, and oblige him to marry her. I apprized him of it. Though willing enough to amuse himself

with the girl, he swelled with indignation at the idea of such a misalliance, and resolved to be revenged.

“ He received an assignation ; I offered him my services, and, while he slipped up to the damsel, I remained sentinel with his valet in the garden.

“ The professor, who had feigned an absence to a neighboring town, soon, as concerted, returned with a priest. We clapped our pistols to their breasts, and threatened to shoot them if they stirred. Meanwhile the daughter received Fitz-Allan with open arms. Vanity and love were the chief springs of her character, and this night she hoped to satisfy both. The false fair expects every moment to be surprised ; at length Fitz-Allan quits her with his usual politeness, as if he suspected nothing, and joins us in the garden. We now threaten to expose the professor to the derision of the town ; he is ready to sink for confusion : however, on condition that he would marry his

daughter to the pastor, who, notwithstanding this little anticipation with Fitz-Allan, was willing enough to take her with a good marriage portion, we agreed to be silent. Thus the damsel, whose pride at every ball would only dance with counts and gentlemen, was obliged to sit down quietly as a parson's wife.

“ This affair made Fitz-Allan and myself sworn friends ; his example weaned me from low company. Notwithstanding the difference of our characters, we were inseparable. I, who was impudence itself in a house of debauch, was sheepish to a degree, in any elegant society, and I felt myself so embarrassed there, that I required Fitz-Allan's encouragement to conquer my *mauvaise honte*. He was the oracle of fashion ; his friendship was a sufficient protection ; but what a difference between his reception and my own—all the women were alert to engage his attention, while I was merely tolerated in every circle. But I persevered ; I em-

ployed his taylor and hairdresser ; I imitated, or rather aped him in every thing—I returned my little bed-maker to her beloved shoe-maker, and though I now and then fell into some scrape, at which the dignified Fitz-Allan shrugged up his shoulders ; though I once slept in the guard-house for having beat a sentinel, and was fined a sum of money for flinging a waiter out of a tavern-window ; yet, I was so changed in appearance and behavior, that the same lady, who styled Fitz-Allan the *aimable vainqueur*, was pleased to entitle me the *aimable polisson*.

“ Fitz-Allan being suddenly recalled to England, I prevailed upon him to cede to me his French valet, La Jeunesse :— ‘ Take him,’ said he, ‘ as my last legacy ; he is a treasure, worth fifty travelling-tutors.’ Being left alone, I ennuied myself at Leipsic, and some days after determined to depart for Berlin.

“ My English carriage was not adapted

to the Prussian roads; one day the wheel broke, and down we came: "How far is the post-house?" asked I; "Three pipes of tobacco," answered the postilion.

"I left one of my servants with the carriage, and walked on to the next village. It lay on the banks of a winding river, at the foot of a lofty mountain: the romantic situation of a castle on the top struck even me, and would have charmed a lover of the picturesque.

"We entered an ale-house: the host, hostess, children, milk-maids, and ostlers, were dipping their forks into a pan of sourcrout, the only eatable in the house. There was not a spare bed to be had; a travelling tailor and a strolling player were to repose on a bundle of straw, and we were invited to be of the party; but the room was one cloud of tobacco, and a number of peasants were gambling in one corner. A charming prospect of a night's rest! I resolved to walk on to the post-house.

“ When hearing that I was an Englishman, the visage of the hostess softened, and she informed me that the castle above was inhabited by a countryman, the Count Tudor, and recommended me to seek a lodging there. “ O sir, it would give him such pleasure; he is the best man on God’s earth, and my lady countess is an angel; she has done so much good. When we are ill she gives us medicines from her own chest: she has clothed so many children, and last hard winter she made soups on purpose for the poor; but if they stay long at the castle, there will be no more poor on the lordship.”

“ I was afraid of intruding upon strangers, and undecided whether to visit the castle, when a gentleman, attended by his game-keepers and pointers, appeared. Every hat went off, the women courtesied at their cottage-doors, and the children ran up to him, and kissed his hand. In passing he spoke a friendly word to our

host, who whispered something in his ear. “ Sir,” said he, accosting me, “ I am a Welchman ; I hope in time to forgive the injustice of your countrymen, but I shall never forget the hospitality of my own. You are welcome under my roof.”

“ The singularity of this address excited my curiosity, and I readily accepted his invitation : we walked up to the castle.

“ His lady received me with the greatest cordiality ; she seemed so happy to see a Briton. She was dressed in white, with all the neatness of an Englishwoman : she had an elegant figure and regular features ; she was in her best years, but the furrow of her care, which had marked her forehead, rendered not her countenance less interesting. A groupe of angelic children, who at our arrival had shut up their books, placed themselves round the tea-table : the sides of the room

were covered with English books and prints. Every article of the furniture was English, and there was in every thing a comfortableness : I seemed transplanted into England.

“ The next day I walked with my landlord to look at his improvements in the pleasure-ground ; but after dinner, “ Without doubt,” said he, “ you are curious to hear what could determine a Cambrian to settle in Brandenburg ; I will walk out with my gun for a couple of hours, and leave you with my wife to hear our history ; for when I think of our case, and the absurdity of your laws, my Welch blood takes fire, and I treat your parliament with epithets which an hereditary senator of Great Britain ought not to hear.”

“ But, my dear Sultana,” continued Lacy, “ perhaps you find my own history sufficiently tedious, and I am afraid you will lose all patience should I inter-

spere it with that of all my friends ; but, nevertheless, I must say a few words about this interesting family.

“ David Morgan was the principal squire of Glamorganshire : his estate was the largest, and the bard used on solemn occasions to repeat the actions of his forefathers, and the genealogy of his house. He had a son, who was to inherit all his property, and a daughter who was to marry the first lover who would take her without any fortune. Among the neighboring squires, who followed his hounds and emptied his foaming tankard, was Owen Tudor. His estate was as small as his family was illustrious, but he wished not to augment it ; he would have been contented to have died where he was born, respected by the gentry of the county and beloved by the few tenants of his little domain. He saw Winifred Morgan, and demanded her of her father, who orders her to receive him as her bridegroom.

“ At first he was indifferent to the

maid; he soon ceased to be so. Their attachment became mutual, and their nuptials were to be celebrated as soon as her brother, who was on the continent, should return from his travels.

“ Her brother broke his neck in escaping from the window of a lady at Nancy, and Winifred was now the richest heiress in Wales; when her father, who, while she had nothing, would have been content to be rid of her as of a bale of worthless goods to a man who had nothing also, resolved that, now she was rich, she should marry none but a rich man; and, though he had encouraged their love, he now separated the lovers, and hastened up to London, to tempt, with the rich prize, the first man whose fortune was equal to her own.

“ Mr. Flint, who had frequently seen her at her father's without being struck with her charms, finds them irresistible now she is an heiress, and follows her up to town. The father proposes him to his

daughter; she considers herself belonging, by every tie of honor and affection, to Owen: but tears, sighs and protestations are vain; her father enters her room with a pistol, and threatens to blow out his brains if she refuse to comply with his projects. She loves her father, and, deceived by his mock transports, consents to become miserable for life.

Owen turns farmer, and hopes to forget her in cultivating his little patrimony; when he discovers there a copper-mine, and suddenly becomes one of the most powerful men in the province; but this cannot make him happy—he broods over the loss of Winifred.

“ Winifred had married a brutal tyrant; they live under the same roof only to quarrel, or meet at meals without exchanging a word. Little prospect of children from such an union: old Morgan laments the want of an heir; he repents of his behavior to Tudor, now the rich Tudor; he offers him his hand; at last

they are reconciled ; their hereditary friendship is renewed. Winifred, ill-treated by her husband, returns to Wales to complain to her father : the lovers meet ; Winifred's confusion tells Owen that he is still beloved ; she forgets her marriage-vows in his arms.

“ Flint is ruined in gambling. Old Morgan, who now detests his sight, will not suffer him to touch his daughter's fortune. Flint resolves on suicide ; but, with a malice worthy of the meanness of his character, sues his rival for adultery ; not out of delicacy or from a point of honor, for he had long winked at their connection, but in order to incapacitate him from marrying his widow, (the marriage of two adulterers being forbidden by the law of the land *.) He

* This episode was written in 1800, when a law to this effect was, notwithstanding the spirited opposition of the Duke of Clarence, the Duke of Cumberland, and other peers, passed in the House of Lords, but was thrown out in the Lower House.

is divorced from his wife, and blows out his brains.

“ Behold three victims of the British law! The haughty Morgan paces his high-roofed hall, and scarcely ventures to glance an eye over a length of pedigree; nor has he the barbarity to reproach his daughter, whose misconduct has disgraced his escutcheon. To her love to her father, she had sacrificed every prospect of happiness—with a filial enthusiasm, she had prescribed to herself a line of duty, but the idea was too heroic, was supernatural; the bow, drawn too tight, had cracked, and with it burst the bubble of her father’s pride. And now no possibility of an heir! The only man of honor, who could have married her with propriety, was prohibited to do so by a law, which serves as a pretext to a rake who is willing to desert the victim of his desires, but debars a well-meaning man from making all the reparation in his power. What asylum for a divorced

woman, but in the arms of her seducer?

“ But what were the sensations of the father, compared to the torments of Owen and Winifred. He saw the beloved of his heart, on his account, disgraced, and excluded from society. All the town-circles, punctilious rather than virtuous, who received her with open arms, knowing her to be an adulteress, now shut their doors against her, now she was divorced. Like the antient Spartans, they considered the disgrace, not in the crime, but in the discovery; perhaps even her father would be obliged to refuse her his protection. Alas, she is pregnant—she flies to the continent with her lover, where they travel together as man and wife.

“ They stop at Freiburg in Saxony, to look at its celebrated mines; a commissioner waits upon them to conduct them thither. An elderly man, who lodged in the same inn, begged leave to be of their party. He seemed so willing to profit by

Owen's knowledge in mineralogy, which, since the discovery of his mine, he had made his particular study, that he was flattered by this deference; perhaps he perceived something extraordinary in him, notwithstanding a slovenly meanness in his dress. His blue coat was almost threadbare, and a quantity of snuff had tarnished his kerseymere waistcoat. He invited him to dinner at their inn.

“ The old man, hearing that they were going to Berlin, gave them a letter to a friend there, who might be useful in procuring them a lodging.

“ They arrive at Berlin, and send the letter to this friend, whom they are surprised to find one of the king's chamberlains. They are invited to dinner, and meet in the old man Frederic the Great, who had just returned from a journey incognito.

“ The Monarch desires Tudor that his wife may be presented to the Queen. Poor Winifred is ready to sink for shame;

but Tudor, in the course of the evening, mentions his situation to the King.

‘I am selfish enough,’ answered he, ‘to delight in your embarrassment, as it may induce you to accept a proposal: enter my service as director of the mines. In the first place, as Prussian Pope, I grant you absolution; one of my chaplains shall marry you to-morrow; and should you repent of your bargain, there are attorneys enough in these dominions who would divorce you for five friederics-d’or. Divorce is the greatest encouragement to marriage: the most cautious may be tempted to enter a garden, when they are sure of finding a way out again;’ and then turning to Voltaire, the King continued, with a sarcastic smile:—‘*Voilà des Anglais, qui cherchent la liberté en Prusse.* Tell me which would be the most effectual way to prevent adultery?’

“To abolish marriage,” answered the philosopher.

“ The next day they were privately married at the chamberlain’s house ; the King acted as father to the bride. Soon after the eldest daughter was born, to whom the Queen stood god-mother.

“ Tudor, having sold his estates in Wales, purchased his castle ; the King presented him with the key of chamberlain, and upon the birth of his son, he had himself created a Count of the Holy Empire.

“ Such was their history : it cost the Countess many a tear. One day that Tudor had taken his gun, I enquired after her, and was directed to her cabinet. It was the anniversary of their flight from Wales, and she had retired to indulge her melancholy ; a casket lay on the table, I imagined that it contained her jewels, and opened it. At her departure, the tender and spirited Winifred had restored to the Flint family the jewels which she had received from her late tyrant, and had filled the casket with the earth of her natal place. This was her

most precious relic!—she never thought on the hills of Glamorganshire without a sigh!

“The acquaintance of this amiable family induced me to alter my route: The baths of Carlsbad had been recommended to the Countess; I resolved to accompany them thither.

“The Count was generally known in Germany, and his society was universally sought, so that I had the advantage of being introduced to all the company on the day of our arrival. The Landgrave of Rosenberg-Brandenstein showed us particular attentions, and insisted that we should belong to the coterie of the Princess, his wife: I discovered afterward that his motives were to engage the Count to enter his service. Thus foreigners are ready to profit by those talents, which the prejudices of Great Britain had forbid him to consecrate to his own country. As for myself, I had no eyes or thoughts but for the Landgravine! Behold me once more deeply in

love! perhaps without knowing it or venturing to confess it to myself.

“ My inclination, however, escaped not the penetration of the Prince; he called me aside, and without any preface, roundly accused me with it; he seemed to seek a quarrel. “ You are a sovereign,” said I, “ but I am not your subject. Formerly an English peer was on a level with a German prince; and though our dignity has almost dwindled into nothing, yet I am a gentleman, and wear a sword.” ‘ Which, for the present, you may put up quietly in its scabbard,’ said he, coolly: ‘ I was looking about for a youth of your spirit, and only wished to try you. In the first place, pretend not to deny that you love the Princess: young man, I am not fond of contradiction. Next answer me, upon your honor, whether you ever mentioned your passion to her?’ I assured him that I never had. ‘ So much the better,’ said he, ‘ you will have time enough for that

afterward.' I was all curiosity—I could not conceive what would follow.

“ ‘ You must know,’ said he, ‘ that my next brother pretends to interfere in my government ; all my court and subjects look up to him as to the rising sun. He thinks that I shall never have a child—in-deed I have too many, enough to supply drummers and fifers to my whole army ; but there is no heir-apparent among them : now look at my spindle shanks, I am not longer fit for the field, I make you my lieutenant.’ ”

“ I had no objection to the commission, we were not discouraged at the difficulty of the project. The Landgravine, though I flattered myself that I had gained her good graces, would never have consented ; she was conscientious in the extreme.

“ A stratagem favored us : we all lodged in the same house ; the Prince arose in the night, gave me his satin dressing-gown, and I returned to his place at the Princess's side. Before day-break the

old boy had the indelicacy to enter the room with a pair of lights. You may conceive the confusion of his consort ! I cast myself at her feet—the Landgrave laughed aloud.

“ A scene of tears, sobs, and complaints ensued. ‘ How many wives,’ said he, ‘ would thank such a husband. I leave you to pacify the foolish woman.’

“ At length I was successful. Policy required us to conceal our amour, and when a husband is in the plot, it is not difficult to deceive the public ; beside, the world did me the honor to consider me the cicesbeo to the Countess Tudor. Her infidelity to her first husband was known, and it was unjustly concluded that she was always ready to surrender to the first summons—unjustly indeed ! for the Countess was the best of wives ; and though at a former period an adulteress, it would be as absurd to imagine every adulteress a Messilina, as every footpad a Cartouche.

“ My guardians were desirous that

should visit Vienna ; my serene friends accompanied me to the capital of the modern Cæsars.

“ But to pass thither from Berlin was a transition from light to darkness. At Berlin a thirst of glory had made a sceptic the father of his country, whose enlightened policy was willing to allow every innocent indulgence to his children. At Vienna bigotry and superstition had hoodwinked the reason and deadened the feelings of the best of hearts, and the virtuous Mary Theresa, the mother of the poor, had published an edict which rendered her sceptre less supportable than that of any tyrant who ever disgraced a throne. The Commission of Chastity was in its full vigor ; the Inquisition in Portugal was never so vexatious or oppressive. The personal liberty enjoyed by the French and Venetians, in the neighborhood of the bastille, or of the dungeons of St. Marc, is some recompense for the loss of their public liberty ; occupied in intrigues

of the boudoir, those of the cabinet are indifferent to them; they are frivolous, but they are happy. Not so at Vienna, where the spies of this singular Commission chaced the young people into the very houses, broke into the bed-chambers, nay, searched even the beds which they suspected of any unchastity. And the abuses of these spies were incorrigible; many of them entered plots with the nymphs of pleasure; these inticed to their lodgings any thoughtless youths who were catched by the spies, and, for fear of being dragged before the Commission, suffered themselves to be plundered to the skin, and the courtezan and the spy shared the booty.

“The government here had adopted the false opinion, that the most effectual method to prevent prostitution and child-murder, and to promote population, would be to force the man, accused by a girl of having rendered her a mother, or even merely of having had a connection with her,

to espouse her on the spot. Many men, some of them above the vulgar, who had become husbands in this manner, were pointed out to me. Their dear halves had a long time carried on a contraband trade with their charms; when these began to fade, they selected among the swarm of their lovers him whom they considered the best match, and accused him before the Commission. The consequences of these forced marriages were terrible; there was less prostitution, but the vices of a monastery and (excuse my frankness, my dear Sultana,) those of a harem undermined the vitals of society, and adultery was certainly not diminished. But it was not that generous gallantry, which has contributed to the polish and amiability of Parisian manners; here it wore the sneak of a pickpocket, not the triumphant air of a conqueror; it destroyed all confidence; servants became the spies on the conduct of their masters, and children were cited as witnesses against their

parents ; and how detrimental to population, for it is the opinion of physicians that cohabitation without love is commonly unprolific. In short, while the population of Berlin, in the land of hunger and scarcity, was under a wise government every day increasing, that of Vienna was diminishing in the midst of plenty and abundance.

“ Such was the state of love at Vienna ; my attachment to the Landgravine preserved me from every danger. I used to see the officers of the police following some young couples among the shrubs and bushes in the Prater, to prevent the possibility of any sin ; but myself was safe ; they never would have presumed to enter the chamber of a princess of the empire. But *La Jeunesse*, my French valet, was summoned before the Commission.

“ The rogue was my *aide-du-camp* in all my amorous expeditions. He knew that a girl had claims upon him, but he

swore he would outwit these heavy Germans. In the anti-chamber* of the tribunal he saw a poor damsel, all forlorn, whose shape plainly declared that she had to require a husband from the Commission. La Jeunesse, finding that her lover had decamped, and had left her little hopes of becoming his wife, offered her a decent sum if she would accuse him of her seduction, but of a prior date to the girl on whose account he had been summoned; the damsel consents, and he appears with a saucy assurance before his judges. They ask him, if he has had any communication with the person opposite to him; he denies not the charge. 'You have seduced her, and you must marry her.' He alleges that there is an other person waiting in the anti-chamber, who has prior claims upon him; the stranger is summoned. They see at first look that she has been a mother before the other.

* See Professor Risbeck's Travels.

The prosecutrix must content herself with a sum of money, and cede her claims. La Jeunesse would quit the court, saying: ‘With this girl here I have already made an agreement’—when the girl denies it. The judges require signature and witnesses; the poor fellow can produce neither, and is obliged, on the spot, to marry a creature whom he saw for the first time in his life. I shall never forget how we laughed at him on his return to our hotel.

“I however pitied him, and was so disgusted at the Austrian jurisprudence, that I resolved to hasten my tour to Italy, particularly as the Landgrave’s presence was necessary in his own dominions. I really shed tears at separating from the Princess. At my departure I congratulated my Austrian friends on their bright prospects, and promised to return to witness the changes that would take place at the Empress’s death; when her son, one of the most enlightened of

princes, acting with the King of Prussia as his model, would abolish all these abuses, and render his subjects the happiest, and his capital, perhaps after Paris alone, the most agreeable residence in Europe.

“I contrived to smuggle *La Jeunesse* out of the town, but the fear of his wife, and of the officers of chastity, would not suffer him to close an eye till we had reached the Venetian territory. At length I arrived at Florence, and became cicesbeo to the Marchesa Orlandini.

“As your mother was a Venetian, my dear Fatima, I need not explain to you this extraordinary custom that prevails in Italy and Spain. Too fond of liberty to respect the duties of marriage, and too attached to their names to suffer their extinction, the haughtiest patricians require only representatives, and not sons as their heirs. It is a pity that the Nair system is not known to them; but cicesbeism is a palliative to marriage, and an ingenious

compromise between family pride and natural independence; and it is better to be inconsistent and happy, than unhappy and rational.

“ I had not long been attached to the Marchesa’s service, when her husband caught a fever. She never quitted his pillow. I imagined at first that her conscience smote her with her infidelity, and that she was desirous of repairing her fault by redoubled attentions, when, to my surprise, she requested me to share in this duty. We used to sit hand in hand at his bed-side; I poured out his medicines, and either the Marchesa, or a Contessa, to whose service the Marchese was attached, handed him the draft. So singular a groupe no country but Italy could present. The two ladies watched by turns, and I know not which was the most anxious, the one to preserve her husband, or the other her *Cavaliere servente*. But in spite of their united prayers to every saint in the calendar, he expired: the Con-

tessa withdrew ; but nothing could convince the Marchesa of his death ; she insisted that he was in a swoon ; her attendants tried in vain to force her out of the room—she seized a dagger, and night and day guarded his corpse ! nor, till the police interfered, suffered it to be transferred to the vault of his ancestors.

“ In any other country I could not have accounted for her conduct ; but the Italian, far from regaining her rights, loses them in becoming a widow : a husband is to her a safe-guard, and not a restraint ; and this safe-guard the poor dowager had lost. When I claimed the continuation of her favor, she pointed to her weeds :—

“ ‘ While the Marchese lived,’ said she, ‘ I was proud of the homage of so amiable a cavalier ; but I am now a widow, and the name of a mother, which then would have filled me with joy, would now cover me with shame.’—My heart overflowed with love and tenderness ; I offered her

my hand: 'What marry a heretic?' said the Marchesa.

"All my visits were vain, all my eloquence thrown away; she would scarcely allow me to kiss her hand.

The next day I received a billet; she avowed her love greater than ever, but that she never would trust herself in my presence so long as she remained single, but that she would look out for a second husband, and give me immediate notice. I flew to her palace—she had departed for her villa.

"I continued my tour through Italy. To forbid me to love, was to forbid my pulse to beat, or my beard to grow.—But my next charmer was in a more embarrassing situation—not that she wanted a husband, for she had married a monster. I arrived at a little bourg in Sicily, belonging to the Duke of Monte-Dragone, and was told that the next stage, which passed through a forest, was infested by banditti, and that I must take a guard.

I laughed at the idea ; but La Jeunesse, who was only a hero in a love-affair, went of his own accord and applied at the castle. The Steward answered that an escort would be ready the next day ; I was unwilling to remain till then, and gave the fellow a severe reprimand for his impertinence, when an old woman in a black veil entered and invited milordo to honor a lady at the castle with his company to supper.

“ I should probably have refused, I was so out of humor, when I cast my eye on a medallion that the old woman, whom some centuries before I should have taken for a Duenna, wore about her neck. It was the lady’s portrait ; a more angelic face I never beheld ! I was desperately in love before I had seen the original. I was reconciled to La Jeunesse, and gave him a gold watch-chain before he had finished my toilette.

“ The lady received me with an air of melancholy that heightened her charms. Beautiful she was, but of a beauty equally

distant from the vivacity of the Marchesa, and the commanding dignity of the Landgravine. The most trivial occurrence dyed her cheek with blushes. But conceive my surprise when she addressed me in English: I complimented her on the purity of her pronounciation; "I am an Englishwoman," said she, and seemed confused. Though all my curiosity was alive, I spared her embarrassment. A long pause ensued: at length she enquired into the course of my travels; and, as I knew many of her acquaintance at Naples, we wanted not conversation. The Gouvernante always found some excuse to leave us alone together: the hours ran imperceptibly away, and when decency whispered to me to retire to the inn, I took leave of her without penetrating the mystery of her existence.

"The next morning I was deliberating whether I with any propriety could feign any pretext, in order an other day to enjoy her company, when the Gouvernante ar-

rived with an apology from the Steward that the escort could not be ready till the next morning, and an invitation from her mistress to spend the day with her at the castle.

“ Every morning I received a like apology and a like invitation.

“ A fortnight passed away, and I had not even laid my burning lips on the white hand of my countrywoman. But while my reason suggested that she might be the most dangerous, my heart felt that she was the loveliest of women : one moment I considered her all purity ; the next moment all artifice ; but, though every consideration induced me to suspect so mysterious a being, there was a modesty, a propriety in all that she said and did, that kept me in awe, that filled me with respect. I had only learned from her that she was an Englishwoman—La Jeunesse had only discovered from her servants that she was a *miladi*.

“ I was more in love with her every

day, and I flattered myself that I was not indifferent to her. Though she never offered me an apartment, but suffered me to retire every evening to a wretched inn ; yet, whenever I talked of returning to Rome, she seemed melancholy, and urged me with the greatest interest to prolong my stay ; and one day, when, perceiving her with her attendant in the pleasure-ground, I spurred my horse over a hedge, and the animal fell with me, she swooned away. Yet she never permitted me the slightest liberty, not even to kiss her hand ; and I must confess that I never attempted any thing further. I sat hours together without venturing to declare the passion that consumed me ; I knew not how to act ; I was afraid of offending the delicacy of a virtuous woman, by an abrupt declaration, or of making what is called an honorable proposal to an adventuress.

“ One day, while I was passing a tête-à-tête in this negative manner, I started

and ran into the garden, as if to hide my shame : my good genius seemed to have awoke ; the idea struck me, that I had dwindled into the plaything of a coquet, and that her vanity was trifling with my weakness ; but then her image, in all its charms, occurred to me ; some obliging speech, some friendly look, some mark of confidence occurred to my memory ; her hand rested on my elbow, the music of her voice sounded in my ear ; and sure enough I was seated again at her side.

“ Tell me,” said she, “ what ails you ? what made you just now run out of the room ? are you mad ? ”

“ Not yet,” answered I, “ but I soon shall be, if my present state of incertitude continue. I know that you are worthy of all my admiration, though I know not whether you are at liberty to listen to my love. I know not your rank ; but, perfect as you are, you would grace any rank. I know not your name, which I should re-

peat with a lover's enthusiasm. I know not whether you are maid, wife, or widow."

"I am all three," said she, and shed a flood of tears—"I am Lady Castleton."

"What the wife of Lord —" cried I, and stopped short with involuntary horror, as if loath to pronounce his name; and yet this name was to be borne for life by the most virtuous, the most delicate of her sex.

"Deprived of the usual comfort of the wretched, that of confiding their sorrows to some friendly bosom, the nature of her wrongs would not allow her to reveal them. But I had heard her history; all London had done justice to her merit, while it had no language to express its indignation against her lord and master.

"The ambition of her family had induced her to accept the offer of his coronet. He treated her with every attention before company, and her extreme youth hindered her from noticing his indifference in private. When, to the surprise of

no one but of his wife, he disappeared, and she, thinking it her duty to accompany him to the end of the world, followed him, without consulting any one, to Naples. There he affected a princely state ; like a grandee of Spain, he was attended by pages ; and, if a coach and six could contribute to happiness, his consort had no cause to complain.

“ All the travelling English shunned their brilliant fetes, but their palace was frequented by Italians of the first quality ; and many a distinguished cavalier was ambitious of being her cicesbeo. But she gave them no encouragement : in answer to their importunities, she alleged her duty toward her husband ; when one of her admirers opened her eyes to his conduct ; but he only succeeded in changing her indifference into aversion, without being able to profit by the change of her sentiments. She now could not longer behold her husband without disgust ; her blood ran cold whenever he appeared in

the drawing-room. She left Naples, and, accompanied by an humble companion, fixed her abode at Monte-Dragone.

“ At the name of her husband all my prospects vanished ; it blasted all my hopes in the bud. Her rigid principles would never have consented to an illicit connection ; and she was married, irrevocably married, married in England. In the other countries of Europe, that have shaken off the papal yoke, she might have regained her liberty ; a divorce would have delivered her from the monster. In Germany and in the dominions of the Great Frederic, she might have pleaded the incompatibility of their tempers, or any other pretext that decency or charity might inspire ; but the laws of England would have obliged her to expose to the malevolence and curiosity of the public, crimes which her delicacy would not allow her to name, or her purity to conceive. —Should she, the tenderest of women, she who would not kill a fly or tread on a

beetle, should she appear before a tribunal against him, who, however detestable in other respects, had always behaved to her with a marked politeness, and with a princely munificence? I could offer no advice, no consolation to a woman, reduced to the cruel alternative of bringing her husband to the scaffold, or of remaining miserable for life.

“ I staid some weeks after with this injured woman. Our interviews were silent and comfortless—no joy to enliven our present moments, no ray of hope to gild our future prospects. Yet how expressive our silence ; no words could have done justice to our thoughts, and we both seemed afraid of saying too much, should we speak at all. Sleep and appetite had forsaken me, and every morning her eyes appeared red from weeping. I determined to put an end to this state of unavailing sufferance ; so, to spare her the pangs of parting, I stole away one night without bidding her farewell : but, when

her gouvernante, whom I had conjured to write to me, informed me how affected she had been at my departure, I was on the point of returning to Monte-Dragone, and on my way to Rome did nothing but curse marriage, which, whether my beloved wanted a husband or had made an unfortunate choice, was perpetually an obstacle to my desires.

“ But will you believe it, my dear Fatima, before I had been a few weeks in the capital of the antient world, I was on the point of bending my stubborn neck to the yoke, and the *aimable polisson*, the pupil of Fitz-Allan, who might flatter himself with having brought to a capitulation some of the finest women in Europe, was about to strike his colors, and sacrifice his liberty to one of the most ordinary insignificant creatures that ever could have ennuied a husband. Her mother, an intriguing woman, had left England, and was making a figure with her last thousand pounds, in hopes of getting a husband for

her daughter. All our countrymen of rank were invited to the house, and I, on account of my fortune and peerage, was more coaxed and flattered than the rest.

“ I had engaged an abbate to attend me as Cicerone in examining the antiquities, churches, palaces and picture-galleries, and the good dame contrived to intrude herself and daughter into the party. In the evening I visited her house, at first, when there was no conversation; but afterward I neglected the conversazioni to visit her house; and here the mother and the Abbate did nothing but caress me, and praise the little accomplishments of the daughter. I was passionately fond of dancing, and the girl really danced well; and as the mother persuaded me that I was a judge of music, I could not do less than be charmed with the daughter's performance, whenever she strummed a tune on the harpsicord. In short, I must acknowledge my weakness; I was flattered into a passion; I made a formal declaration to the daughter, which, she being too timid

to say yea or nay, the mother accepted in her name, but cautiously insisted that the ceremony should not be performed till the marriage-settlement, in all legal form, should arrive from England.

“ I waited its arrival with impatience, when a packet, directed to the Earl of Hereford, came by the post. I broke it open, and an inner cover was directed to Mr. Hugh Lacy ; if I was surprised at this direction, judge how I was confounded at the contents.

“ My father the Earl had, while a mere boy, married the chambermaid at his boarding-school. In any other country, but our land of liberty, the police would have punished the woman for decoying a thoughtless boy, and have annulled so monstrous a match ; but here the family could only bribe her to conceal her claim. It was kept secret, and he married my mother, a gentlewoman of a suitable family : but now that he was dead, the wench, after a silence of five-and-twenty years,

had, at the instigation of a rascally attorney, proved her marriage before the house of peers; and this august assembly, in which were so many friends and relatives of our family, were obliged, though grieved and burning with indignation, though they pitied me and respected my mother, were obliged to judge according to the letter of the law, and to acknowledge this chambermaid as Countess and her son as Earl of Hereford. However notorious it was that she had not cohabited with the Earl, but had lived with a common soldier, yet, as the Earl was within the kingdom, the law not only declared her child heir to his title and princely fortune, but pronounced my virtuous mother an adulteress, and, having deprived me of my rank and patrimony, stigmatised me as a bastard, out of indulgence only, allowed to bear the Lacy name.

“ I shall not attempt to describe my sensations, my despair bordered on madness; had not *La Jeunesse* removed my

pistols, I should probably have blown out my brains. He, not knowing how to manage me, sent for one of my acquaintance, who found the papers on the table, and before night acquainted all Rome with my history. I locked up myself for three days; at last I wrote a letter to console my poor mother, and dressed and waited on my destined bride.

“ But the old Dowager, who used to hurry to meet me while I was one of the first peers of the realm, scarcely moved on her chair to notice a beggar and a bastard; and I fancied that I saw a sarcastic smile on her lips, as the servant announced me by my ancient title. The girl, however, received me with her usual good nature, and was about to comply with my request, when I, too melancholy to join in the conversation, desired her to play a tune on the harpsicord; but her mother set her down to cards with a dull country squire, to whom before she had scarcely deigned to pay the least attention.

“ But, notwithstanding these slights, I was still infatuated enough to aspire to the hand of this girl; and so great is the spirit of contradiction, that this opposition rendered a violent passion, that which was before a mere inclination. But the mother mocked my pretensions. I reproached her with her breach of word; she insultingly answered that her word was given to the Earl of Hereford, and not to Mr. Hugh Lacy. I appealed to the daughter; but she, poor creature, without any character at all, replied that her mother knew best.

“ I came a second and a third time, but could not approach the young lady, for my countrymen would not longer give way to me; at length I was desired to desist from my visits, and even found the door shut against me.

“ Perhaps the old dame was not so wrong, for marriage is a bitter pill, which must be gilt; and I was without property and without expectations; I had not

enough to support myself, much less a wife and family. But she ought at least to have treated with consideration and refused with gentleness a man who had lately been so well-disposed toward her. Fifty pounds in my writing-box were all that I had on earth. I discharged my valet, chasseur, groom and courier; sold my horses, and, with the wreck of my fortune, departed for England with a muleteer.

“ I arrived at Lyons; it was the last week of the Carnival, and the whole town was a scene of gaitiy. I was luckily of a happy temper, always disposed to look at every thing in the pleasantest point of view, and if I had lost a fortune, I congratulated myself on having lost a wife too, and was enjoying the present moment, without reflecting on the past or thinking of the future. A row of carriages were parading up and down the streets, and the ladies within pelted, with a shower of sugar-plums, any man of

their acquaintance who might pass by. An elegant equipage, with a number of servants in handsome liveries, had frequently paced along, and a lady never failed to distinguish me with a volley of bonbons ; I caught one of these papers. On my return to my inn, on opening it I found written with a pencil, “ Hereford.” I was surprised, as you may imagine ; I knew no one in the town. But at the next redoute, a mask chaced me up and down ; I turned and followed her ; she led into an adjoining apartment, she dismasked, and, conceive my astonishment ! it was the Marchesa Orlandini.

‘ How good you are, my lord,’ said she, ‘ in coming to Lyons ; I have indeed expected you a long while, and have written to you letter after letter, but I know you are not fond of writing.’

“ I protested, as indeed was the case, that I had received none of them. ‘ What, you know not that I had found a husband ?’ No. ‘ Nor that, after I had

found a husband, a husband found me?' No. She bade me sit down in the alcove, and related her history.

"She was of an antient family in the south of France, and married in her sixteenth year to an officer, to whom she had been promised almost in her cradle. Happy in their mutual indifference, they both followed the bent of their inclinations. The Marchese Orlandini, a Florentine gentleman, had entered the French service, and belonged to the same regiment with her husband; he became her *ami de maison*, and loved her with the ardor peculiar to his nation; when some domestic concerns having required his presence in Italy, the Vicomtesse, who had fainted at an assembly two evenings before his return, was just buried. He ran about the town in a fit of despair; at midnight he woke the sexton*, and, with a pistol at his breast, obliged him to

* "*Les Causes celebres*;" or, Remarkable French Law-suits.

conduct him to the vault, where she still lay in state. She seemed so fresh and blooming in death, he cast himself upon her body, and the warmth of his kisses revived her ; she opened her eyes and saw herself in the arms of her adorer. Having married, they fled across the Alps, and she was received with open arms by his family at Florence. Marriage is the tomb of love. He ceases to be the attentive gallant who presented his arm to her at every public place ; nor is she the rose-colored beauty who expected him in her conscious boudoir. Two lovers only meet when in good humor, or when resolved to be so ; a married couple think themselves entitled to torment each other with their ill-humors. When a lover presents a trifle to his beloved, she receives it with smiles ; when a husband makes a present to his wife, which indeed happens seldom enough, he runs the risk of being told that he has no taste, or that she could have bought it cheaper. It was soon

whispered to the Marchesa that her husband kept an actress; but before long she had the satisfaction of seeing him the acknowledged cicesbeo of one of her friends. The next night she met me at the Cassino, and accepted my services.

“ One never perceives the absurdity of a custom to which one is used from the cradle. No other Roman Catholic would have opposed the early burial of her husband, but the remembrance of her own escape inspired her with the hopes of preserving him.

“ While I was in Sicily, she had given her hand to the Conte di Vallombrosa, and had written to me, that having found a husband, she was impatient for my return to Florence.

“ When unexpectedly a French gentleman was presented at a conversatione; it was the Vicomte her first husband.

“ He was so struck with her resemblance to his late wife that he could not turn his eyes from her; she was at first

ready to sink, but had recovered her presence of mind before he could find any friend to introduce him to her ; her French pronunciation of the French language confirmed his suspicions.

“ He made inquiries, and heard that she had been the widow of his brother officer ; he dispatched his valet to Lyons, who discovered that her coffin was filled with stones.

“ He reclaimed her of Vallombrosa. That a husband should be willing to be rid of his wife is natural enough ; but that another should wish to repossess her may need some explanation. Her only brother was lately dead, and she was now an heiress ; this being unknown to the Italian, he made no objection to her returning to Lyons with the Frenchman, and, luckily for her, it was to her perfectly indifferent, whether her children should bear a French or an Italian title ! Luckily indeed, for so indissoluble is the tyrannic tie, that even after having been

buried among the dead, the papal law would have obliged her, however unwilling, to return to a husband whom she might have hated; and supposing that this husband, in the mean time, had married, his wife, like my poor mother, would have been pronounced an adultress, and his children, like myself, would have been degraded to bastards.

“ Such was her history: I returned with her to her hotel, and for the last time in my life was treated as a lord. I was too proud to inform her of the reverse of my fortune. The next morning, in a note, I bade her farewell, and continued, in the diligence, my route to England.

“ An other thunderbolt awaited me on my arrival in London; my poor mother had been obliged to resume her maiden-name; she could not survive her humiliation, but had died of a broken heart, and having left no will, I was not even entitled to her property, which could only descend to legitimate issue. Behold me

then a beggar in this expensive capital; my friends and school-fellows turned their backs on me, and I had no claims on any ones protection or assistance; for my pride would not allow me to apply to the present Earl, the son of the soldier and the washerwoman, whose giddy extravagance squandered away my fortune, and whose upstart importance rendered him the disgrace and laughing-stock of his brother peers.

“ My purse contained the last guinea; I was desperate—I went to the play-house, half determined to put an end to my existence the next morning. I happened to sit next to a nymph of pleasure; I was sunk in thought, and little disposed to make her acquaintance: but she accosted me; her features appeared familiar to me—she was formerly the waiting-woman of a Mrs. Warren, a friend of my late mother; she invited me to accompany her to her lodgings, and exerted herself to dissipate my melancholy.

“ At last I avowed to her my situation :—‘ No,’ said she, ‘ you need not blow out your brains—while my charms enable me to gain a guinea, we will share it together.’

“ So low was I reduced, my dear Fatima ! but this generous creature loved me with such fervor—I may say, with such fidelity, that though her charms were public, yet I had no rival in her affections.

“ When one day a carriage stopped at the door, and who should enter the room but Mrs. Warren. Her husband having returned to England, she came to settle an assignation with a gallant at the house of her late Abigail : how great was her pleasure and my shame at this meeting—she, who once knew me as Earl of Hereford, full of hopes, and looking down with disdain upon half mankind, now found me living on the charity of a prostitute.

“ ‘ My dear Lacy,’ said she, ‘ your friend Fitz-Allan has informed me how

much he was indebted to you at Leipsic ; he is not in England, or he would already have found you out. He has intreated me, by my friendship to him and to your late mother, to endeavor to serve you. When I heard your case, I wrote to France, Germany and Italy, to all of your acquaintance, but in vain ; none of them knew where you were. My brother, the envoy in Russia, had written to me to look out for a secretary for him ; I thought on you directly, for without doubt your knowledge of the foreign languages well qualify you for the place.'

“ The next week my two protectresses wished me success, and I departed for St. Petersburg.

“ The Envoy received me with open arms ; I was presented in the first circles, and if I had remained Earl of Hereford, I could not have met a more favorable reception. The Empress herself, one of the first women who have done honor to their sex, distinguished me among the crowd of

courtiers ; and every thing promised me not merely a comfortable, but a happy existence, when unluckily I fell in love with the young Princess Strogenoff.

“ She really was a most amiable and accomplished creature. She spoke every modern language ; and how flattering it was to an Englishman to hear English spoken in perfection on the banks of the Neva. Her father being a widower, she did the honors of his house, and always contrived that I should sit next to her at table. The ladies of Petersburg were as enlightened and as little scrupulous as their sublime mistress ; and yet I was so smitten with the Princess, that I would willingly have espoused her, and that after having been happy in her arms. This indeed may be considered the clearest proof of love, for before success has crowned ones desires, one is in such a flurry that one only desires, and cannot tell whether one loves or not. I however was too low in the world to aspire to her hand.

“ One day her father, returning from court, announced that he had promised it to a Polish count, whom the Empress was desirous of drawing over to the Russian party. Thus avarice, interest or ambition form marriages, and not one in ten, uninfluenced by either of these motives, takes place out of love, which ought to form them all. The Count was perfectly indifferent to the young lady ; she felt neither aversion nor inclination to his person ; and as to his mind, she could not judge of it, never having spoken a syllable to him. But her only objection to the match was her fear of being obliged to separate from me to reside with her husband in Poland. She consulted me on the subject ; but as she despaired not of being able to persuade him to reside in Russia, and as he was a man of quality and rich enough to support the splendor of her family, we agreed that it would be politic to accept him, and he was invited to come and court in form.

“ The day for their nuptials was fixed.

Some weeks before I was one evening in her apartment: unexpectedly we heard the Count's voice on the stairs; she concealed me in a closet, and adjusted her countenance to receive him; but the troublesome fellow remained hour after hour, and it was midnight before she could yawn him out of the room.

“ When she released me the door of the hotel was already shut; what could we do in this dilemma? she, however unwilling, was obliged to beg the porter to let me out. I returned home happy in this escape, when the insolent rascal followed her up into her apartment, and demanded her compliance with his desires as the price of his silence. Poor girl! she was in his power; he was half drunk, and spoke so loud, that she feared the people in the adjoining room would overhear his threats. However disgusting to her delicacy, she was obliged to submit. Several days passed, I suspected no harm, and she flattered herself that the storm was over.

“ It was the festival of St. Nicholas, the chief patron of Russia, in whose honor a day of the most stupid devotion gives place to a night of the grossest debauchery. Drunkenness, in defiance of a rigid police, swaggers about the streets, and the cellars and stews resound with the orgies of servants and bondmen. The porter was drunk among the rest ; brandy untied his tongue, and he boastingly related to his comrades his adventure with his young mistress. It seemed so incredible that they all pronounced him a liar, when he offered for a dram to prove the fact : they agreed, and, when the family was in bed, he introduced them into his master’s hotel.

“ The Princess hears a tap at her door, and arises ; the drunken wretch enters, and rudely insists on a second compliance. Her intreaties and promises are vain ; in vain she offers him her watch and the trinkets that are on the table ; she has no alternative. Upon the settled signal

his indelicate comrades rush into the room. She had submitted only to save her honor; her honor was now gone, she sprung up, seized a penknife, and plunged it into his heart.

“ Meanwhile the house was alarmed, the room filled with servants. I will not describe the rage and shame of her father, nor his grief and despair some days after, when he and all his family prostrated themselves in vain at the Empress’s feet to procure the daughter’s pardon. With feet swollen from the knout, this beautiful, this interesting woman had scarcely the strength to ascend the scaffold, where she had resolved to die as a heroine. The day of her execution was a day of mourning to all Petersburg, and a general groan went through the crowd of spectators as her head fell to the ground and the executioner held it up by its fine hair streaming in blood.

“ It was hinted to me by the court, that decency required of me to quit Pe-

tersburg ; a change of scene was necessary for the reestablishment of my spirits, which I recovered not during many months. I left Russia loaded with the presents of the worthy Envoy.

“ Thus I was again turned adrift on the stormy ocean of life ; but love, who had cut the cable, soon offered another harbor ; and, my dear Fatima, I may say, to the honor of your sex, that, though deserted by all my friends and bottle-companions, the attachment of the women, who had loved me for myself (and there is a wide difference between loving a man for himself and being willing to espouse him for his money) abated not at my change of fortune. The Vicomtesse had written to me to reproach me with quitting Lyons so suddenly without making a trial of her friendship ; and the Landgrave of Rosenberg-Brandenstein had, at the desire of his consort, offered me an honorable post at his court.

“ I determined to accept this offer, and

arrived at Brandenstein; the Prince and Princess were absent on a visit to the Hague; but I found a letter, in which he desired me to draw on his minister for any sum for my travelling expences, and invited me to join the Princess in Holland.

“ Love here played me an other vile trick; I never could resist the impulse of the moment, and though on my route I had done nothing but reflect on my approaching felicity with her serene highness, whose image even appeared to me in my dreams, yet, at the theatre of Amsterdam, I had not the forbearance to refuse a nymph of pleasure who invited me to her lodgings.

“ I followed her through many crooked lanes, and over a number of bridges into a miserable alley; but its wretchedness deterred me not; we entered a respectable house, but its appearance struck me not at the time. The host brought a bottle of wine; I recollect that I soon felt particularly drowsy, I fell asleep in my charmer's

arms. When I awoke the next morning the bird was flown: I examined my clothes, my watch and purse were gone. I went to the door, but found it locked on the outside; I called and kicked to no effect. I went to the window, but I found it barred, and looking upon a canal. I waited hour after hour in this embarrassing situation.

“ In the evening two sturdy-looking fellows entered with the host, who acquainted me that I must make up my mind to serve the General States in Batavia. In vain I told them that I was a gentleman, or attempted to push my way out of the room. I was without arms, and almost exhausted by hunger: the fellows began to beat me with their sticks; they placed some coarse meat upon the table, and left me to my meditations.

“ I was treated in the same manner for some days: at length the host came and demanded payment for this miserable food. Upon my reproaching him with

his villainy, he coolly shook his head, and, as I was not yet dressed, he carried away my clothes with him.

“ In an hour came an other with a sailor’s jacket and trowsers, and a chequered shirt; they however had the precaution never to leave my shoes, lest I should jump out of a two-pairs-of-stairs window.

“ This confinement would certainly have ruined my health, but now, twice a week, they brought me my shoes, and I was obliged to walk out for fresh air with a number of prisoners, most of whom were German apprentices, decoyed like myself into the power of the soul-sellers, as these wretches are called. Our walks took place in the open day, and on the public road, before the eyes of the Hollanders, some of whom mocked our distresses, others pitied us and shrugged up their shoulders. Should any prisoner accost a passenger, our keepers, who

treated us like so many convicts, ran up to him with their sticks, and beat him till he was silent ; and the magistrates, who had not the heart to avow them, winked and even encouraged these outrages.

“ When the Batavian fleet was ready to sail, we miserable beings were distributed among the vessels. You may conceive my despair ; once Earl of Hereford, and now a common sailor in a merchant-ship. I was often on the point of plunging into the sea ; I suffered every indignity during a voyage of many months. At length, a storm arose and separated our fleet ; I really wished that it would sink our vessel to the bottom. After being tossed about for several days, we struck upon a rock ; finding ourselves sinking. I caught hold of a mast, and floated till day-break. My forces were almost exhausted, when some fishermen took me into their boat : we had been wrecked on

the Malabar shore ; I alone had escaped, and the magnanimous Nairs adjudged to me all our riches that could be rescued from the waves. Behold me once more the favorite of fortune. You may imagine how the usages of the country enchanted me ; I appeared at the Samorin's court in a style suitable to my birth ; his illustrious niece, the Princess Agalva, soon honored me with her friendship.

“ I had often described to her the peculiar customs and manners of the west. “ All the misfortunes,” said she, “ which you, my dear Lacy, have suffered in Europe, have proceeded from the ideas on love and marriage that reign there. Prejudice even singled you out for a victim before your birth ; but at Calicut no such matches, as the late Earl of Hereford was silly enough to conclude, could take place ; for there can be no misalliances, where there are no marriages ; nor could you have been degraded as a bastard in a

country where no one pretends to know his father. Here the Marchesa Orlandini would not have renounced you for the want of a husband to father her children ; nor Lady Castleton, because she had espoused a monster. You might here have entered the apartment of the Landgravine in open day, instead of stealing into her arms under her consort's dressing-gown. The devoted Strogenoff would not here have been reduced to accept the terms of a vile slave, because she had found in you a lover worthy of herself, nor have suffered for his murder an ignominious death on a scaffold ; nor would a courtesan have betrayed you here as at Amsterdam. That poor wretch, after being seduced, only retaliated in preying on your sex. But in Calicut, there are neither courtesans nor virgins, for the two extremes are equally unnatural and equally detrimental to the state. Love here shuns not the light of the sun, nor is

it, as in Europe, degraded as a vice, nor allied to infamy and guilt*. Here, without blushing, you may follow the dictates of nature; nor need sneak into cellars and alleys, at the risk of being kidnapped and murdered."

These advantages determined me to live and die at Calicut; when Agalva took a fancy to visit Europe, and I could not refuse to accompany her. Having resided some time in England, we left it together; we had already doubled the Cape, when a Persian vessel hailed us. "I have seen," said Agalva, "the inconsistencies of Europe; let us take a look at the still greater absurdities of the Mus-sulmans; it will give us a greater relish for my natal country." I was so impatient to arrive at Calicut, I exerted myself to dissuade her. Having visited Ispahan and Scyras in disguise, without

* LOVE, AN ALLEGORY, by James Lawrence.---
Faulder, 1802.

any circumstances worthy of being mentioned, we arrived here at Kandahar; where a slave, as you know, discovered the Princess. We were conducted before the Sultan, and, gracious heavens! how many years have elapsed, since we were first confined within the walls of this seraglio.

BOOK XI.

ARGUMENT.

LACY relates that Agalva has been carried off by a band of robbers---The barbarity of the eunuch Mustapha---Emma de Grey discovered---The return of the Nairs from their expedition---The sufferings of Emma at Morocco, in Egypt, in Syria, at Bagdad, at Ispahan, and at Kandahar.

BOOK XI.

HERE Lacy ended. Firnos could no longer contain his extacy ; he, who at first had listened in hopes of discovering the unhappy Englishwoman, had redoubled his attention at the names of Lacy and Fitz-Allan, the friends of his mother ; but what language could paint his joy at hearing that she herself had escaped from the fury of the waves, and was perhaps so near to him, was probably under the same roof. His joy had more than once threatened to betray his concealment, before he had heard the end of Lacy's history, and he was now on the point of bursting forth, when he heard a shout of joy. " She's found, she's found,"

cried many voices ; he looked through the iron bars of the window, and beheld (for it was now day-light) the knights of the phoenix and his other countrymen running in haste to the great gate of the seraglio. "She's found, she's found," cries the Prince, and darts from behind the curtain, to the great consternation and surprise of the sultana and her companion ; but, without stopping to gain any information from them, or to satisfy their curiosity, he runs against the door and bursts it open, seizes a light, rushes along the dark gallery, glides down the winding staircase, and in an instant is in the garden.

"Where is she," cried he to the Grand Master, who was passing along attended by his knights.

"The merest accident," answered he, "has discovered her. We had released so many women, that, in order to convey them all to the Indus, I had put in requisition all the camels, horses and mules, when a number of asses, loaded with meal,

offered to pass through the great gate. The knight on guard stopped them in the name of the Order; and on the driver's hesitating to unload them, or perhaps his confusion betraying him, the guard began to fling the meal-sacks on the ground. One fell with violence, and the pavement swam in blood; they cut open the sack, and a poor woman more dead than alive was drawn forth."

As they approached the unhappy creature, the surgeon had just recovered her; she opened her eyes and shut them again: "No," said the Prince, "this is not she; this delicate figure, this little person, this is not she."

"Who?" cried every voice.

"My mother—my long-lost mother," cried the Prince, returning. None understood his words, but many followed him without knowing whither: few only remained to aid the sick woman.

The Prince reaches the tower; a number of torches are fetched and follow him

up the stairs. Stone after stone, tumbling from step to step, announces that some one is descending : they proceed, and discover Lacy feeling his way down as well as his fetters would allow.

“ Where is Agalva ? where is the Princess ? ” cried Firnos.

“ Who are ye ? what know ye of the Princess ? ”

“ We are Nairs,” cried a hundred voices.

Lacy is overpowered by joy.

His chains are already hewed asunder ; he is brought down into a saloon in the garden ; but his feelings will not permit him to answer their many questions : the Nairs behold his emotion with pity, but cannot suppress the impatience of their curiosity.

At length his astonishment subsides, and he comprehends the extent of his felicity ; he is free, under the protection of the Nairs, and in the presence of the son of Agalva. The Grand Master and

knights form a circle, and, at the Prince's request, he thus finishes his history.

“ Since it is to you that I owe the recovery of my liberty, your highness has already heard our adventures till our arrival in this seraglio. We had already been confined six years, and Agalva had borne a son, when the late sultan died, and the present either sold or gave away the wives and concubines of his father. Agalva's having promised not to rouse her countrymen to avenge her ill-treatment, we were permitted to continue our route to Indostan ; we were already within a day's journey of the Indus, when, in passing through a wood, we were attacked by a band of robbers ; we fought ; they wounded my horse ; it fell, and before I had disengaged myself, they had seized the Princess, and rode off with her at full speed. I could not follow them, I crept on as well as my wounds would allow me, when the governor's guards passed by, and examined my passport : they inquired

for the Princess, and conducted me to the neighboring town, where I was closely confined. Being escorted to Kandahar, I was thrown into a dungeon, but the sultana procured me the apartment where your highness discovered me. For several years the kindness of that good woman has softened the rigor of my confinement; nay, she has saved my life, for the tyrant, her son, fearing that I might escape, and rouse the vengeance of the Nairs at Agalva's history, had determined to put me to death; but, though his mother's intercessions averted the blow, heaven knows when I should have regained my liberty."

"And where is the son of Agalva?—where is the young Prince?" cried the whole body of heroes.

"Where is my brother?" cried Firnos.

"All Agalva's offers," answered Lacy, "however advantageous, were rejected by the Sultan; and at first, her maternal feelings would not suffer her to depart. At length her patriotism and her love for you,

O Firnos! prevailed; for, O my Prince, all her vows were for your welfare—all her hopes were concentrated in you. When in England, she had wept whole hours for Osva's loss; while the tear still hung in her swollen eye, your image restored the sunshine of her breast. "Still I have Firnos," she cried; and here among the horrors of the seraglio, "Ah! could Firnos know my situation! You recollect him, Lacy?" said she; "he was then a child in my lap; but he will soon be of an age to wield his sword for his mother's deliverance." And when she left your brother here, "Poor ill-fated child," cried she;—"but I must renounce thee, or Firnos."

"Ill-fated, indeed, for the young Prince was soon after sacrificed to the jealous policy of the present Sultan, who ordered all the children of his father to be strangled."

"Vengeance!" cried a hundred voices, and every sword leaped from its scabbard.

The Prince seemed lost in thought; all his hopes of delivering his mother were

thus blighted in the bud ; he had almost figured himself in her embraces, and he is replunged into the uncertainty, whether death has put a period to her sufferings, or whether she is still in the power of a band of outlaws. He walks up and down in silent meditation among his comrades, whose thoughts are occupied with the prospect of the most bloody war that ever ravaged two empires. If the Nairs were so ready to take up arms to redress the wrongs of any indifferent woman, what signal vengeance must follow the imprisonment of one of the Samorin's sisters, and the foul murder of his nephew ; all Kandahar must float in blood, every circumcised Mussulman perish by the sword.

A Nair entered the saloon. " My lord," said he to the Grand Master, " the surgeon has restored his patient—her fits have subsided ; and the slave, who was disguised as the miller, has not only confessed, that he was bribed by a

eunuch to convey her out of the seraglio, but has produced this letter to the Sultan.

*“ To the Sublime Sultan, from Mustapha,
his slave.*

“ Selim, the faithful Selim is not more, but, praised be God and Mahomet his prophet, for he fell in the service of his master. What confidence can be placed in woman? the chief eunuch discovered a vile Christian in the arms of the submissive Roxana; he ordered her to prepare for death, when she stabbed him to the heart!—And, ah! she lives to boast of this outrage; for, alas! magnificent Sultan, the Nairs are revelling in thy harem, and profaning the privacy of thy love. There is not one of thy wives or women but has dishonoured thee, and deserved a hundred deaths. They have rent their veils asunder, and walk with naked faces about thy gardens. When these abominable infidels are gone, the very furniture

must be purified by fire. Should any straggling female be left behind, she must find no mercy in thy sight, let her blood wash out her offences.

“ Of all thy eunuchs, I alone have escaped the sword. And when thy victorious arms shall have driven these abominable infidels beyond their river, and the tributary provinces shall send their daughters, ambitious of embellishing thy harem, perhaps thou, magnificent Sultan, mayst not think me unworthy of following Selim in his post.

“ * Taken, at the age of fifteen, from the interior of Africa, I was at first sold to a master, who had more than twenty wives and concubines. Judging, from my grave and silent air, that I would suit a harem, he had me rendered completely fit for one; how fortunate in the end, as it brought me nearer to the ear and confidence of my master. I entered the

* Montesquieu's Persian Letters---64th letter.

harem, which was a new world to me. The chief eunuch, the severest man that I ever saw my life, governed there with an absolute sway. There was no idea of divisions and quarrels; there a deep silence reigned throughout. All the women retired to rest at the same hour from one end of the year to the other; they arose at the same hour, they entered the bath in turn, they came out at the least sign that we made them; the rest of the time they were almost always locked up in their chambers. It was a rule to keep them in the greatest cleanliness; a particular attention was paid to that point, and the least omission was punished without mercy. 'I am a slave,' said he to them, 'but the slave of the man who is your master, and I only use the power which he has given me over you—it is he who chastises you with my hand.' In short, magnificent Sultan, I, though in the beginning the last of the blacks in this orderly harem, was a thousand times

more respected than the chief eunuch has hitherto been in thine.

“ But this great eunuch soon discovered my genius ; he fixed his eyes on me, and spoke of me to my master, as one capable of following his system, and of succeeding in his post ; he was not discouraged at my youth, but judged that attention would supply the want of experience ; in short, I made so much progress in his confidence, that he scrupled not to entrust into my hands the keys of those awful places that he had guarded so long. It is under this great master that I learnt the difficult art of commanding, that I adopted the maxims of inflexible sway. I studied under him the heart of women, I learned to profit by their weaknesses, and their caprices ceased to perplex me : he was my model ; and when they were worked up to a fury, it was charming to behold with what calmness he supported their tears and reproaches. “ See,” said he, with an air of compla-

gency, “how women should be governed; I am not embarrassed by their number. In this manner I would manage all the women of our grand monarch: how could a man hope to captivate their hearts, had not his trusty eunuchs first subdued their spirits.”

“He was not only endowed with firmness but with penetration; he read their thoughts; their studied looks and feigned mien could conceal nothing from him; he knew their most private actions; he heard their slightest whispers; he made use of some of them to dive into the secrets of the others, and he took a pleasure in rewarding such communications; for none of the women ever entered my master’s chamber without being fetched; they received this favor with joy, but saw themselves deprived of it without complaining. The eunuch called whom he chose, and turned the eyes of his master on those whom he had in view; and this distinction was the recompence of some

secret intelligence; and he had convinced his master that it was proper to leave to him the choice in order to augment his authority. In this manner was governed a harem, which I think was the best regulated in all Persia.

“ My attachment and zeal for thy service has recommended the following measure. One only of thy women has escaped the contagion. When the prudent Selim discovered a European loitering near the seraglio, he ordered me to confine the Englishwoman in a separate chamber; and it is at length notorious that the present invasion of the Nairs has only taken place to release this woman; but in this I am resolved they shall not succeed. They have made the strictest inquiries after her, and no corner in the seraglio, nor even in the city, may be secure from their search. I have therefore sent her in a meal-sack to the summer palace, till thy sovereign pleasure be known. Should she be suffocated before she

has passed the outposts, that were better than that she should fall into their power and glory in our losses. I have preserved her not that thou mayst honor her with thy love ; she is a perverse, obstinate creature, undeserving such condescension ; and I hope that thou wilt give me a commission to fill thy harem with the beauties of Georgia and Circassia ; for I have visited these countries more than once, and know the prices better than any one. Let these ascend thy bed, and rejoice in thy favor ; but I have secured this woman, to secure thee the satisfaction of chastising her with a rod of iron ; let her expiate all the pollution that she has brought upon thy seraglio."

The Grand Master swelled with indignation as he finished the letter, and inquired after the miscreant, who could brood over the gratification of such unprovoked cruelty and ungenerous rancour ; but Mustapha had already fallen : betrayed in his disguise by the slave his

accomplice, he had attempted to stab the Englishwoman, and was cut into pieces by the swords of the Nairs.

“ But where is the poor Englishwoman ?” cried Firnos : “ knights of the phoenix, champions of injured innocence, ye have redeemed your knightly words ; I thank you in the name of my sister Osva, for you have delivered her countrywoman ; but come, Lacy, let us visit her, she is your countrywoman also, and may need our consolation.”

They followed the Nair to her apartment ; but what sight struck them there ! She was in the arms of De Grey ; it was his sister Emma. She sat reclining her head upon his bosom ; he clasped her hand ; their eyes were moist as Firnos entered. De Grey attempted to speak, but could articulate nothing ; he burst into tears. At last, “ It is my sister Emma,” he cried. The Prince joined their hands and mixed his tears with theirs.

“What satisfaction my sister Osva will feel,” said Firmos, “it was she who proposed this expedition; ye all owe your present happiness to her. She has opened Lacy’s prison; she has rescued you from the jaws of death; she has restored your sister to you, and her liberty and all her rights to your sister. But this expedition, which has made you so happy, has only procured us the terrible obligation of avenging the wrongs of Agalva and the murder of her son.”

The Prince left the room, and Lacy followed him; for De Grey and his sister were too occupied with themselves to pay any attention to their countryman.

It was agreed in the council of war, that the Grand Master and half of the knights should fortify themselves at Kandahar, till the uncertainty that covered Agalva’s fate should be cleared; that Firmos and Lacy should hasten with all expedition to inform the Samorin of these events; and that the other knights should

escort the De Greys, Roxana, and the women to the Indian frontiers.

Lacy was affected in departing from Fatima: notwithstanding the paradise of delight which Calicut must present to a man of pleasure, it grieved him to quit his benefactress. In vain he endeavored to persuade her to accompany him, she alone of all the women in the harem was resolved to remain behind; the others were not mothers, and were therefore right in following their lovers to a land of liberty; but Fatima would not leave her son the Sultan. The duties of a woman toward her child are sacred; she has received her child from nature, who is infallible; but she owes no duties to her lover, for him she has chosen herself, herself who may have been deceived in her choice, or at any rate may hope to choose a second time with equal propriety.

At their last interview, the Sultana presented Lacy with a diamond-studded sword-belt; it was of Indian workman-

ship. It had been found among the treasures of the late Sultan, and was once the property of some Nair. Lacy promised to wear it at Calicut for Fatima's sake.

At length the march was sounded, and the cavalcade proceeded; the beauties cast a last look on the walls of their prison. Never was mortal so happy as Walter de Grey; his fondest hopes, which his cooler reason before must have pronounced extravagant, but which like a golden dream had amused his solitary hours, now seemed so likely to be realised. Calicut was to the thoughtless Lacy a garden of love, where, bee-like, he might fly from beauty to beauty, and sip the sweets of every flower; but to the aspiring De Grey, it was the theatre of his ambition, whence he might soar like an eagle with his eyes fixed on the sun of honor. De Grey was no enemy to love, particularly in a country where, there being no marriage, it could not clip his

pinions, or weaken his flight; nay, he rather considered love the characteristic of a great soul, as all heroes in every age were lovers. But love, though it held a high, only held a subordinate post in his opinion, and when the sun of honor burnt before his eyes, the lamp of Cupid was a mere taper by day-light. During the first days of their route, he reflected for hours together on the career that was about to open to him—to him, the friend of Firmos and the countryman of Osva, and who had so many claims on the gratitude of the Samorin and of the state, in contributing to discover the last remaining daughter of Semiramis. He already grasped at the first honors in the empire, and, to complete his happiness, his sister, on whom before his conscience would not allow him to think without pain, was restored to him; and he would now be able to make her the amplest reparation for all his former injustice. Her children should be his heirs. He burnt with im-

patience to hear her adventures ; but, in the general bustle and confusion, something had always interrupted their conversation. The roads in Kandahar were too narrow to admit a carriage, and their wounds obliged them both at first to travel in separate litters. At length, when they were within a few leagues of the Indian frontiers, Walter prevailed upon Emma to mount with him on the same camel.

As the animal marched with solemn step, Emma trembled like an aspin leaf, and turned her head aside ; Walter looked in her face, and saw a tear in her eye. “ What ails you, Emma ? I am so happy, so very happy, and you in tears ? ”

“ O yes,” answered she, “ the moment is come, when I must damp your joy ; every evening, when we stopped at the caravansary, I saw you so cheerful, in such high spirits, and I retired to wet my pillow with my tears. O Walter, I cannot delay the recital of my history ; I

know your affectionate curiosity, and yet you will curse the hour when I was restored to you. What scenes of human depravity and wretchedness have I not witnessed? what hardships have I not undergone? I can never return to England to render our name infamous. If formerly I was a disgrace to the family, what am I now, after all the indignities that I have suffered in the East.

“ You remember the dreadful morning of our separation at Tetuan* ; no length of time will ever efface it from my memory. I heard you intreat the barbarians to suffer our last embrace ; I forced my way upon the deck, I saw you already chained in the boat, and I fainted at the sight. I know not what had passed during my swoon ; it was evening when the pirate entered the cabin, and told me in broken Italian that I must follow my new master. A Turk of a solemn appearance,

* Vol. i. book iii.

but courteous for a Mahometan, saluted me; I was too happy in leaving the brutal pirate, and could not lose by the exchange. I descended into the boat; when, in order to hide me from the public view, a cloth was flung over my head, and fell to the ground, so that I absolutely could see nothing. I knew however, from the sound of the oars, that I was still on the water; at length we landed, and I was led almost blindfold through a number of crooked streets; the disorder and loose stones of the pavement, at every step, threatened to throw me down, and my nose was molested by the intollerable smells proceeding from the streets as we passed: but I am grown familiar with every nuisance during my long stay among the Mahometans.

“ At length, I heard a door bolted behind me; the cloth was cast aside, and I found myself in the middle court of an ordinary house. But, my dear brother, you have seen too many Mahometan

towns, and know how all the houses in Africa and Asia are built on the same plan, I therefore shall not describe them.

A number of women examined me from top to toe, and made their observations in a language that I could not understand.

An old woman brought me a mess of rice, and, leading me to a small room, made a sign to me that the bed there was designed for me, bolted the door on the outside, and left me to my reflections.

“ You may conceive the trouble in which I passed that night ; I was indeed long habituated to misfortune, but to be at the mercy of such a nation of caitifs, and torn from your arms, my brother, my only protector ; add to this, my uncertainty about your fate ; perhaps you were destined to equal, though never to greater horrors than your unfortunate sister.

“ The next morning the Turk entered my chamber, and, after inquiring after my health, (but, O spare my blushes—can

a modest woman confide to the ears of a brother such scenes as this?) proceeded with the greatest composure to question me, and seemed offended at my reserve. He discovered the loss of my virtue; he had been deceived by the pirate. He pushed me from him with such violence, that I rolled off the cushions and fell with my head against the floor. I was taken before the *cadi*, and underwent a second examination. The Turk was slave-purveyor to the Grand Signor at Constantinople; and to introduce into the harem there any but a spotless virgin, is a capital crime. The Moors have no idea of delicacy, modesty, or virtue, but consider this loss a blemish, which, like any blemish in a horse, might lessen the value of a woman in the opinion of a purchaser. The pirate was condemned to take me again, to restore the money, and to pay a fine to the Emperor of Morocco.

“ He cast a veil with two eye-holes over my head, such as the penitents wear

in Catholic countries. In our return from the *cadi's* we met another pirate, who was driving a Spanish *capuchin* before him, "How provoking," said my master; "I wished to make a cruise, and shall not be able to dispose of this woman. Hark ye, friend, you are in no hurry to heave anchor, I will give you this woman for your priest."

"So saying, he led me into the corner of the street, and looking around whether any one were near, lifted up my veil and showed me to the other. But his friend shook his head; "No," said he, "a priest is as good as ready money; the Order of Mercy are obliged to redeem him, and your woman is nothing but skin and bones. She will cost more to fatten than she is worth, and may remain long on my hands before I may sell her; but as you are impatient to set sail, I will keep the woman for you during your absence, and sell her, should an opportunity offer, for your account."

“ This proposal is accepted, his master gives the friar a kick to make him increase his speed, and, taking me by the hand, we follow to his habitation.

“ Here I was considered a mere article of trade. The barbarian used to visit me every morning, but not to inquire whether he could contribute any thing to my comfort during my stay under his protection, but to examine whether I were growing fatter. In such a condition I was of course restless, and walked up and down the yard; when he, afraid that constant motion might impede my embonpoint, had the brutality to order me to sit still. In short he treated me with as little delicacy or consideration as the poultry fattened for the London market. And when I, from want of spirits and exercise, had lost my appetite, one of his slaves, with a stick in his hand, forced me to eat a portion of rice every day. They also gave me a broth that was considered particularly fattening. To its taste I had no

objection ; it was a change to the perpetual rice with which they crammed me, till I at length discovered that it was composed of kittens and puppies. You may conceive my disgust ; but the cudgel was produced, and though it at first turned my stomach, I was obliged so many times a week to take a mess.

“ I was at last sold to the governor of one of the interior provinces of Barbary. In this harem, in one respect, I was happy. My virtue (if, after all my errors I could still pretend to any) remained untouched. This was some comfort under all my ill-usage. I was only the handmaid of a favorite, not a favorite myself ; I never entered the Governor's presence. But what a life I led, submitted to the caprices of a creature who, like most women in harems, had all the ignorance but not the innocence of a child. Our master passed the morning in the divan ; after dinner he retired to his harem, where he had ten or twelve women. But should he fling the

handkerchief to any but to herself, my mistress imputed it to my neglect in arranging her toilet, and passed the evening in beating and tormenting me.

“ I had not been here many months, when my master received notice from one of his spies at the court of Morocco, that his successor was already on the road, accompanied by the two mutes ordered to strangle him. The gloomy villain was determined to disappoint the avarice of his enemies. His horses being the most valuable of his possessions (for, in the East, a horse is generally worth more than a woman, and he boasted to have some of King Solomon's breed), he first slew them; and having stabbed all the slaves who came in his way, he entered the harem, and murdered his women one after the other, not out of jealousy but out of malice. My mistress had beat me the day before for having forgot her ear-rings, which were of great value; and now, as if by the judgment of God, the barbarian

tore them so rudely out of her ears, that the blood trickled down in two streams: he then stabbed her to the heart, and filling his pockets with their rings, jewels and ornaments, and every other valuable that he could carry off, he mounted the only horse that he had spared, and escaped into the next kingdom.

“ His successor, on his arrival, found the gates of the seraglio shut. He knocked in vain: at last they were burst open, and his suite entered a range of empty halls and courts. The surviving slaves were fled; the harem floated in blood. The surgeon, having discovered signs of life in me, engaged to save me; the new governor answered, “ If so, he might keep me for his pains.” He little imagined that my uncle was lord high chancellor.

“ At length my wound was healed; I owed my life to the surgeon; but how small was the obligation, for what have I not suffered since? When I was perfectly restored, he demanded in return a

compliance with his desires. I struggled, as a virtuous woman ought to do. But I should have been comparatively comfortable, had I remained subjected to him alone ; but I soon learned that his circumstances would not allow him such a luxury as a wife ; in the mean time he only indulged himself in the pleasure, as it cost him nothing, till he should have an opportunity of disposing of me to advantage. At length a slave-merchant bought me, but I suppose for a mere trifle, for of all the slaves who, together with myself, were offered for sale at different markets, I was upon every occasion treated the worst.

“ My dear brother, I will not mention all the plans that I made from day to day to regain my liberty, and how I was ever deceived in my hopes. At one time I was desperate, and ran to the next pond to put a period to my existence ; at another I had slipped out of the gate, was brought back by a eunuch, and was severely beaten for the attempt ; for

the Mahometans have so little gallantry, that they make no scruple to strike a woman.

“ In travelling, I was sometimes placed in a wicker-cage, with curtains closely drawn, and fixed on a horse's back ; sometimes in a basket at the side of a camel. I was carried from town to town, from kingdom to kingdom, enveloped in so thick a veil, that I could see nothing of the prospect. When we arrived at any place, we were locked up in the caravan-sary till the day of our departure ; so that I not only saw so little of the towns as of the country, but, as they are called differently in Europe, I know not through what towns I have passed. Should any one have the idea of purchasing us, he had the liberty to examine us ; and when these chapmen were eunuchs, we were ordered to undress. They not only questioned us by signs about our talents, but made us run, walk, dance, jump over a stick, breathe in their faces, show our

teeth, and so forth ; in short a horse at a livery-stable could not have been submitted to a stricter examination. Ye belles of France and Italy ! who receive the homage of your generous cavaliers, only cross the Mediterranean, and what humiliations would not await you !

“ In every town the slave-merchant sold some of my fellow-travellers, and bought others ; but no one seemed disposed to purchase me. I had probably passed through Algiers, Tunis, and Barca, but was perfectly ignorant what part of Africa I was traversing, when, one day, a high wind blew away my veil, and I looked round for the first time during many months, and beheld the pyramids of Egypt ; they were at some distance, and their immense bulk cast a shadow over the plain. Yes, my dear Walter, I was in Egypt. What a confusion of ideas hurried on my soul, how great was the trouble of my sentiments ! Who would have thought, in the days of our infancy,

when our good mother dedicated so many of her evenings to our instruction, and we read together the history of the Ptolemies, and of Pompey and of Cæsar; who would have thought me destined to visit the country of Cleopatra, to visit it and in my present misery? The noble Templar, Sir Reginald de Grey, before whose picture in the old hall, you, when a child, used to stand lost in admiration, little thought, while he was dictating laws to the soldans, on the humiliations that one of his nieces was doomed to suffer on the banks of the Nile. All the little occurrences of our home and family crowded on my mind; and I forgot Pompey, Cæsar, and Cleopatra, to think of our dear mother, of Edmund, and of Walter. A tear stood in my eye, when the camel-driver perceived that my veil was gone and brought me an other; I would willingly have looked at the pyramids, but he would have laughed at my curiosity, even if I could have explained my desire;

and probably I, of the whole party, was the only one who ever knew or cared by whom or for what they were built, or had ever heard of the illustrious personages who had once figured in this country. I was the unhappiest in our caravan, and yet I must confess that the idea of my superiority gave me some little satisfaction.

“ At length we halted at a town, and the same evening the slave-merchant found a purchaser for me, who, having examined me, paid a sum of money, locked my room-door for that night, put the key in his pocket, and returned the next morning to fetch me home.

“ But here I was weak enough to flatter myself with a gleam of happiness. I could scarcely believe myself in a Mahometan country; the doors of our new habitation had no bars, no bolts, they stood perpetually open; and the women, to whom I was associated, received me

with an open air and a frankness of manner, which seemed to mark a union and concord seldom existing among the rivals of a harem. They were allowed to go in and out as they pleased: two of them invited me to take a walk with them to look at the town; and this is the only town in the East that I was ever permitted to examine at my ease. I began to form a favorable idea of my new master, who treated his females in such a liberal way; but I was afraid that my companions sometimes abused this indulgence; for, though all the women, whom we seldom, if ever, met in the streets, were muffled up to the very tips of their fingers, my new friends not only went without veils, but with their bosoms uncovered, really in an indecent manner, and, instead of remaining backward and modest, as their sex, not only among Mahometans, but every where ought to be, they laughed and nodded to every man whom they

met. I often blushed for them, and trembled lest their husband or master, for I knew not whether they were wives or slaves, should hear of their misbehavior, and lock us up in future.

“ But what surprised me the most, we had music every evening, and our master had so few ingredients of jealousy in his character, that he even permitted us to dance before strangers. I imagined that he must have travelled and adopted the customs of Europe; I hoped at first that he might understand some European language, in which I might settle a sum for my ransom, for I only knew enough of the language of the country to ask for common necessities.

“ At length quiet, good humor and good living had restored my good looks, and a greater consideration was showed me than at first; I was removed to one of the neatest apartments, and conducted to the bath every morning, which is no

small comfort in that hot climate. But with my good looks returned all my distresses ; my master's indifference continued. But one evening a stranger followed me into my apartment, and attempted some liberties with me. I struggled ; for a long series of misfortunes has not entirely broken my spirit. He flew into a passion, and cursed my obstinacy in a stream of Italian oaths. It was so long since I had heard a word of any European language, that I leaped for joy at the sound of what, I fear, was the bitterest blasphemy. I cast myself at his feet, and intreated him to spare my virtue.—‘ Who would have expected such scruples in a brothel ?’ cried he.

“ I almost fainted at the word ; when, to my horror, I was informed, that in all the towns and villages along the Nile, are institutions, where travellers are entertained gratis ; and that wealthy Mussulmans, on their death-beds, consider it an act

of duty to found such houses of hospitality, and to fill them with our unhappy sex for this charitable purpose *."

Walter.

There is more justice than delicacy in such foundations. So great are the abuses of polygamy, that a rich Mussulman deprives his poorer neighbors of the women that should have contributed to their happiness. From the same principle, our usurers, in England, found alms-houses.

Emma.

I never suspected the scenes that passed around me. My miserable companions were at the disposition of every guest; and these guests were frequently camel-drivers, muleteers, and others from the very dregs of the people, and, what were the worst and the frequentest of all, dervises, grosser and more disgusting than the capuchins of Europe. I had hitherto escaped their notice; but, O my dear

* Buffon.

Walter! can you have the patience to hear these degrading details:—those noble ages are over, when a brother's sword would have ended, at one blow, the misery and infamy of a sister.

Walter.

Permit me to interrupt you. Are you sure, my dear Emma, that you were still in Egypt? I should rather conjecture that you had fallen into the hands of the chief of the Druses, who invites all travellers who pass through Martuan* to choose among the women of his seraglio.

Emma.

“ No, my dear brother; what confirmed my opinion that I was in Egypt was, that, during some months in the year, the neighboring country lay under water; still, however, I could only guess, till I met this European, with whom I could converse. He was an Italian renegade; he sighed, and confessed that he was

* Griffith's Travels.

unhappy, and well he might be, having forsaken the religion of his ancestors. I revealed to him my birth and quality, and promised that I would make his fortune, if he would assist my escape. He agreed that he would return the following week, and demand an interview with me, and, in the mean time, prepare a camel and every thing for our flight. We might let ourselves down from the window, and before day-light be beyond the reach of our pursuers, who would not give themselves much trouble to recover so abject a being as myself. So low was I degraded, that I flattered myself that my very meanness would contribute to my safety.

“Time seemed to have lost its wings during this eternal week ; I counted every hour, every moment ; I heard the priests on the minarets announce every prayer. At length it was the night preceding that fixed for our departure, when, to punish my ingratitude for thinking only on my approaching happiness, instead of thank-

ing heaven on my knees that I had escaped contagion in this house of infamy, the door of my chamber opened, and a merchant of Bagdat entered, to interrupt my golden dream. He rose the next morning, and went to harness his camels; when he roused the whole house with a cry of thieves!—his saddle-bags were stolen. He summoned our keeper before the cadì, but the house, being a charitable institution, possessed no funds for an extraordinary expense, and the magistrate perhaps flattered himself with having judged like a Solomon, in permitting the plaintiff to keep his bed-fellow instead of the articles he had lost. Conceive my despair! I expected to be free on the next night, and on the road to Edmund; perhaps into your arms, my dear Walter. I wept, I entreated, I struggled in vain. What Mahometan pays any regard to the tears, prayers, or resistance of a woman? I was placed on the camel, instead of the saddle-bags, and

after a very long and tedious route through a desert, we arrived at a city, which I have reason to think was Aleppo.

“ At this place resides a British Consul and a number of Europeans: I hoped to find an opportunity of discovering myself here, and of procuring my ransom. But here also I was disappointed; an English merchant had ventured to walk in the street with his wife, and she being without a veil, a Turk thought proper to insult him, and cry out, ‘Frangi cucu,’ as the Turks take it for granted, that every European, who, in their opinion, is weak enough to treat his wife in a liberal manner, and puts any confidence in her honor, must consequently be a cuckold. Our countryman lost his temper, and had the imprudence to strike him. The populace was furious that a Christian had presumed to strike a true believer; the magistrates could not restrain their rage; the houses of many of our merchants were pillaged; the government recommended

to them to quit the town till the storm should abate, and before their return my master left Aleppo."

Walter.

My dear Emma, what a cruel destiny has ever separated us. We were then each so near the other, and some obstacle has ever risen between us. I then was at Aleppo; the possibility of hearing some account of you had brought me thither: but this very tumult hastened my departure for Bagdat.

Emma.

We also departed for Bagdat; and would a stranger to Mahometan brutality conceive in what manner I, who in England never rode an airing of above five miles on the gentlest pony and on the softest saddle, in what manner I was now forced to ride fifty miles a day, till I had completed a journey of twelve hundred, and this on the worst road and on the roughest horse? But who can define the limits of female patience?—who knows what hardships and

fatigues the frame of a woman is capable to support? Often faint with thirst in this hot climate, and almost suffocated for want of air, I was forced, with my bones aching and my skin lacerated, to jog on in a canvas sack.*

Walter.

O yes, an eye-witness of such barbarity can conceive it. In this very journey, between Mosul and Bagdat, I and my guide one morning joined a little caravan, and I saw a sack sitting upright on horseback; but how great was my surprise and indignation at hearing that it was a woman. Soon after I saw her fall from her horse; I sprang to her assistance, when her master, without showing the least compassion, pushed me back, and bade me to mind my own affairs. I was afraid that she had received some hurt in the fall, for we continued our route without her.

* Campbel's Travels.

Emma.

So, then, my dear brother, I was not deceived—it was no dream—no delusion of my fancy ! I really heard your voice—it went to my heart, and I swooned away at the sound ! When I awoke, I found myself alone with the merchant in a wretched caravansary ; all the others had left us behind. Your words remained impressed on my remembrance ; but yet I could never satisfy myself whether it were not a mere dream.

Walter.

O my sister, I was not master of my feelings at seeing a stranger in such a situation ; but had the possibility of its being you occurred to me at the time——

Walter stopped short : with an involuntary motion he grasped his sword, and gnashed his teeth for rage. Emma leaned her head on his shoulder, and shed a shower of tears.

After an interval of silence, a jolt of the camel recalled Emma's thoughts, and

she continued. “No wonder that you discovered me not at Bagdat; I was confined there in a room twelve feet square; a court, not larger than our yard in London, was allowed me for exercise, and this was surrounded by a high wall. My windows looked not toward the street; but if they had, my master probably would have shut out the view. Buried alive, I saw not a human being, save this disagreeable old man. I knew nothing of what was passing in the town. No amusement, no work, no book; I was ready to die from ennui. How wretched the wife, in Europe, who is married to a husband old enough to be her father; but hers must be halcyon days compared to mine! How wretched the favorites in the harem of a sultan; but she at least may taste the charms of friendship—she lives among companions—she enjoys some society; but conceive, how wretched must be the concubine of an indigent Musulman; he cannot afford her a slave to

amuse her solitude, nor a eunuch to guard her fidelity ; but, when he goes abroad, must lock her up like a horse in a stable. Like the prisoner in the bastille, I really believe I could have made a spider my favorite. Had I been guilty of the most atrocious crime, no severer, no more intolerable punishment than this confinement could have been devised. Heaven be praised ! that the choice was not offered to me, or, I am afraid, I should have preferred my Egyptian captivity !

“ It was in this dreary prison that the knight of Malta * visited me ; but he probably has described to you the horrors of my treatment. Many months had rolled on, since his departure, but how many I cannot say ; I had neither pen nor ink, and tried in vain to mark every day on the wall. I sometimes flattered myself with the hope of being ransomed ; at others, the consciousness of my own

* Vol. ii. page 212.

unworthiness made me fear that my family, so justly irritated, would leave me to my fate, and that my infamy would sink into a foreign grave.

“ My master was a shopkeeper. You know that, in the East, a particular street is appropriated to each trade, and that the dwellings of the tradesmen are often in a distant part of the town. My master, when he went to his business in the morning, left me provisions for the day, and locked the door after him. One evening, he came not home as usual, and I sat up for him all night ; the second day he returned not also, and I was obliged to eat what I had left the day before ; but conceive my fright, when he remained absent that night also. On the third day I had not a morsel of bread, not an eatable in the house. I was afraid that some accident had befallen him. I will not pretend to have been anxious about his safety ; he was an object of my aversion and disgust ; but he might have died of

an apoplexy, and I was in danger of starving. In vain I knocked at the door, and screamed with all my force; it was long before I was heard, and when my voice at length reached my neighbors, no one understood my broken language, and they only supposed, what there happens so often, that a man was beating his wife. Two days passed, and no one came to my cries. I was faint with hunger, hoarse with crying, frantic with despair: by chance, my eye fell upon a faggot; I summoned all my expiring strength, I struck a light, and set fire to the door; I escaped through the flames. When I think on my resolution on that occasion, I scarcely know myself. But, alas! the flames which saved me, communicated to our wretched dwelling, which was only of wood, and before long the whole street lay in ashes.

“Once more I was dragged before the *cadi*; but hunger so far absorbed all my fears, that, without attending to the griev-

ous accusations that my neighbors were bringing against me, I made a sign that I wanted something to eat ; nothing had passed my lips for three days. At length, when I had recruited my forces, I contrived to explain my case. My master was missing, nor till after some weeks was it discovered that he, returning home intoxicated with opium, had fallen into a canal. I now, being without a master, was sold by auction, for the benefit of those who had suffered by the fire. I was purchased by another tradesman, who lived more wretchedly than the poorest journeyman in a manufacturing town in England, and in whose close cabin I was nearly suffocated with tobacco. This fellow was the greatest profligate. One evening, having lost his money at a coffee-house, he fetched me, and staked me. The person, who won me, staked me again, and so forth ; I know not how often I changed masters among these brutal artisans in the course of the night.

I stood trembling in my veil, and was shoved from behind one seat to another, as the run of the table decided. At the end of the game I belonged to a Persian, who was returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he had purchased three yards of linen for the shroud in which he intended to be buried. With him I arrived at Ispahan.

“ I now belonged to the most superstitious of all bigots, who even believed in lucky and unlucky days; of which absurdity he had given a proof at our departure from Bagdat; for, in order not to begin a journey on a Tuesday, he, though the night was stormy and without a moon, left the town late on Monday. No Christian could be more firmly convinced of the truth of the Gospel, than he was of the mission of the one hundred and twenty-five thousand prophets, and of Mahomet, the seal of prophecy. He fasted with the greatest punctuality, and wore round his arm, as a talisman, a proverb

of the prophet Ali, engraved on a silver plate. He never did the most immaterial thing without consulting a dervis, than whom, no popish monk could have hit on more expedients for fleecing his flock ; and, though jealous as his countrymen, he placed such faith in this man of God, that he even trusted me alone with him ; and this priest not only would have made no scruple in deceiving his friend, but even seemed surprised that I should. He ridiculed his friend's confidence, and, without any preface, talked to me the language of unchastity. O my dear brother ! in whom can one believe, when the servants of God scoff at the duties of their religion ? And he offered his infamous proposal with so little delicacy ! But I have remarked that the Mahometan women have no point of honor, no idea of virtue, and are only restrained by bolts and padlocks, and, far from shuddering at the thought, take as much pleasure in deceiving their husbands or masters, as a

school-girl feels in outwitting their governess. But I hope that my brother Walter has too good an opinion of me to suppose me capable of any voluntary transgression; when I sinned, it was from necessity and not from choice, and heaven, I hope, will only weigh the will and not the deed. But my opposition only excited the priest's desires; my master fell sick, and his false friend worked on the fears and qualms of his conscience, and persuaded him that his illness was the judgment of heaven, for living under the same roof with a *Feringi*, as the Christians are called in Persia. The sick man determined that very day to remove the danger, but was too ill himself to expose me for sale at the market; the priest protested that he would not defile himself by touching me, till, at length, he seemed to give way to the proposal of the patient, and engaged to sell me for the benefit of a neighboring mosque, which was to put up prayers for its benefactor's recovery.

But instead of selling me, the consummate hypocrite, who would defraud the church with as little remorse as he deceived his friend, carried me to his own habitation.

“ All the indignities that I had undergone, even in Egypt, were nothing, in comparison to those that I suffered now ; my infamy there was public, and whatever is public, even vice itself, loses much of its natural grossness, and assumes a kind of propriety beyond what is practised in secret. My new master and two other dervises used to retire to his cabin, and intoxicate themselves with wine and opium, (for these priests set at equal defiance all the laws of their prophet.) Once they insisted that I should join in their orgies ; but I could not smile at their sallies, and my tears trickled in the cup of joy. Irritated at my refusal, my master swore that he would sell me to an old woman of his acquaintance, who kept a few miserable girls in the quarter of the unveiled women. So, from the num-

ber of courtesans, who are forbidden by the police to wear veils, is called the least reputable part of Ispahan.

“ Think not, my dear brother, that resentment induces me to blacken the character of my prosecutor, nor must you be surprised at any connection between a dervis and a woman of her vile profession. How horrible are the consequences of polygamy ! While women by hundreds are confined in harems for the pleasures or rather for the vanity of the great, their poorer countrymen live in a state of privation. For them a vigilant police has enregistered many thousand females and licensed these houses of infamy ; and these are not visited, as in Europe, only by the reprobate and profane, but persons of religious principles are, from the present state of things, obliged to frequent them. Their consciences sting them in their pleasures ; to silence their scruples, they have contrived contracts of enjoyment (for it would be wicked to call them contracts of

marriage) for one, two or three hours, or for a whole night * ; these are formally signed and countersigned, and many priests gain their livelihood by giving their benediction to this orthodox prostitution.

“ It was from the conversations of my master and his worthy associates that I had learned these circumstances. He went out early the next morning to execute his threat. The horrors that awaited me drove me to distraction. What a prospect of degradation ! In Egypt I had never suspected the excess of my infamy. I was resolved on suicide ! Heaven pardon my ingratitude ; for my deliverance, when least expected, approached. The mother of the Shah had received a harpsicord as a present from some European trading company ; no woman in the harem could play upon it ; a public crier was sent round the town,

* Chardin's Travels in Persia.

who, with the sound of a drum, offered a large sum for any European slave skilled in music. My master having met the crier, returned with the chief eunuch, who came in state to his habitation. I could scarcely have imagined him an officer of such importance. I was produced, trembling from head to foot. This dignified personage questioned me, with official solemnity, about my knowledge in music, and desired my master to fix my price; the other, who saw an opportunity of making his fortune, begged leave to present me to the Princess, and before I left his roof, took to himself the merit of my change of fortune, and, with a servility that could only be equalled by his insolence on the preceding night, requested me, in a whisper, to promote his interests at court. The eunuch cast a veil over me. O my dear brother! my spirit was so broken, it seemed that my honor, if not my virtue, was restored to me with this

veil. I was placed in a close-curtained chair; some slaves preceded us with clubs to drive away the populace; I heard the gates of the seraglio close behind us.

“ This, my dear Walter, was the most tolerable period of my captivity. I might have been happy, had I not trembled for your fate—had not my natal country often cost me a sigh. I not only lived in ease, but in abundance; and, what a change! I seemed to dream. From one of the most wretched quarters, I seemed transported into a fairy palace. The magnificence of the harem would beggar description, it almost exceeds imagination and belief; the floors were spread with the finest carpets; the winter apartments were wainscoted with inlaid work of mother-of-pearl and of different colored ivory; the walls, in those destined for summer, were incrustated with the porcelain of Japan, and, to give them an agreeable coolness, and to cause at the same time a pleasant dashing sound, water glided from

one marble bason into another, or played like a fountain in the air*.

“ But with what admiration I was struck at the pavilion, where, soon after my arrival, I was presented to the mother of the Shah ; the gilded sashes were thrown up ; the jessamines and honey-suckles, that twisted round the trunks of the neighboring trees, shed a soft perfume, and hindered the violence of the sun ; the ceiling was painted with all sorts of flowers, that seemed ready to fall out of gilded baskets in a shower on our heads. However, in this first presentation my flurry was too great to allow me to observe the elegance of this saloon.

“ On a sofa, raised above three steps, covered with the finest carpet, sat my new mistress, reposing on cushions of white embroidered satin. Her appearance had nothing that could inspire either love or respect; she might in her youth have been

* Lady Mary Wortley Montague's Travels.

handsome, but her features wanted all expression; her figure was short and thick; she seemed good-natured, at least she was perpetually laughing; her clothes were rich beyond idea, but badly put on; her turban was every moment near falling off; her hair hung blowsily about her shoulders; she smoked out of a long pipe, which rested on the ground.

“Two eunuchs placed the harpsicord in the circle, and I was ordered to play: probably I was too embarrassed, my hand trembled, I shook like an aspin-leaf; in short, I gave no satisfaction; the lady soon made me a sign to desist.

“Here a number of girls were ranged before the sofa. They reminded me of the pictures of the nymphs. All nature could not furnish a more perfect scene of beauty. Four of them began to play the softest airs on their guitars, which they accompanied with their voices; the others danced by turns: and this dance, how different from whatever I had seen before!

nothing could be more artful, or more significant ; the tune, how soft ! the motions, how languishing ! what expression in the pauses, and in their dying eyes ! and without doubt, to crown the scene with the appearance of a sex forever banished from a harem, a troop of women in men's clothes entered ; the dance grew more animated, or rather it was a pantomime. Every one strove to attract the notice of the Sultana. I observed a tear in her eye. She laid aside her pipe, and bade one of these false men to sit down on the sofa by her side : she soon after made the others a sign to quit the room.

“ Some days passed before I was summoned again into her presence. I had conquered my former embarrassment, I was perfectly at my ease ; my execution on the harpsicord received the Sultana's approbation. During a week, I played to her every afternoon, and whenever I lifted up my eyes, I found hers fixed on me. Once,

after I had finished, the lady called me to her, told me that the collar of my robe sat awkwardly, and condescended to adjust it with her own hand. At that moment her beautiful favorite swooned away*. The next day, her eyes were red from weeping. Perhaps she had committed some fault, for when I had finished my performance, and the other women had retired, and the Sultana ordered me to sit down on the cushions by her side, the poor damsel fell on the ground before her, clasped her knees, and burst into a flood of tears—"Out of my sight," cried the Sultana, "none of this ridiculous behavior. What pretensions in that silly girl, as if I might not dispose of my favor as I think proper; and you I find more amiable." As she said this, she kissed me; she asked me so many questions about my disasters; she seemed so interested by my history; every trifle

* Baron de Tott's Memoirs.

seemed to concern her. She certainly was a good woman, but she had her peculiarities ; though a sloven in her own attire, she always found some fault in mine ; she was perpetually placing and replacing some part of my dress, and could never find it to her taste.

“ I now not only accompanied the other girls into her apartment every afternoon, but in the morning also I was desired to play on the harpsicord. As the cushions of the country were too low, a chair, in the European fashion, was made for me : the Sultana would often sit upon it by my side. She certainly had a musical soul ; she would often interrupt me, by falling on my neck and shedding a shower of tears ; perhaps they recalled to her memory some interesting event, some lost friend, some disappointed hope.

“ I now was dressed almost as magnificently as herself, and enjoyed her favor to such a degree, that half the harem paid court to me. Every day I had to beg a

favor for one, or to intercede for another who had committed some fault. I was happy in these frequent opportunities of obliging my friends. But ah! my brother! the post of a favorite has its inconveniences—I had my enemies also. Even in a seraglio there is an opposition party; these did their utmost to mortify me; they practised every little pitiful trick, which only a girl in a boarding-school, a convent, or a harem, could devise. One, however, is too ridiculous to be forgot. Being a Christian, whenever I appeared, they began to imitate the grunting of a hog. One of them had the hardiness to enter my cabin, and scratch on the wall the picture of an animal; but as she had never seen a hog, it had so much resemblance to an elephant: a eunuch, however, gave her a severe whipping, for having, in defiance of the Koran, made the likeness of a living creature.

“ I laughed at all this; the favor of the

good Sultana was an ample recompence; when one of my friends warned me that the fallen favorite had a design against my life. I had done nothing to offend her; I was told she was jealous of me. How could that be? I had not robbed her of a lover—there was not a man in the harem. All this was an enigma to me; but a few nights after, one of our companions, who was dressed like myself, was poignarded by her to the heart.

“The next morning the Sultana sent for me; ‘Alas!’ said she, with tears in her eyes, ‘to what danger have you not been exposed on my account?—what amends can I make you? O that you loved me with equal affection! I can offer you nothing but my love, and my love has no value in your eyes.’

“I assured her of my gratitude and affection—I fell at her feet!

“‘Oh, not at my feet, but to my heart,’ cried she: ‘O that I could flatter myself

that you really loved me!" She pressed me to her bosom—we mingled our tears.

"' But we may be interrupted. O my dear Emma,' said she, (for she had learned my name, and more than once I heard her repeat it to herself with such tenderness); "O my dear Emma, if you really feel for me, come, when the other women are asleep, to my bed this evening—O how my heart beats to confide to your faithful bosom its cares, its hopes, its wishes! Farewell, Emma; farewell. Beware of the second eunuch, he is the creature of my enemy, the Sultana Zaida; should he catch us together, we are undone: kiss me—O assure me once more that you love me!"

"Indeed, my dear Walter, when I reflect on this behavior of the Sultana (for I often think of the poor woman, and regret her unhappy end) I am almost inclined to believe she was mad; perhaps some unfortunate passion had turned her brain; otherwise, I cannot account for

some of her words and actions. At night I stole, on tip-toe, to her apartment, as much led by curiosity as by obedience; for she, without doubt, had some secret to confide to me. In compliance with her directions, I took care not to wake the eunuch, though I could not conceive why we should dread a discovery—when, heavens! what a sight!—I found the good Sultana strangled in her bed! Her murderers had left the fatal cord about her neck. Conceive my horror: at length I recovered my faculties, and crept unperceived back to my cabin.

“ I lay trembling in my bed, when an uproar roused the whole seraglio. One of those revolutions, so frequent in Persia, had taken place. The Sultana Zaida had had my patroness strangled, and having caused the eyes of the Shah, her son, to be put out, had placed her own son on the throne. I find that a counter revolution has lately re-established the blind prince. But ah! his unhappy mother! she who

treated me with such kindness ! I have her dying image perpetually before my eyes !

“ A few days after her slaves were sold to the highest bidder. I was purchased by the slave-purveyor of the Sultan of Kandahar.

“ The character of a harem, like that of a despotic government, depends upon the personal qualities of its master. The Sultan of Kandahar was naturally of a humane temper. It was one of his favorites, who extorted from him the order for the execution of his brothers. He was indeed violent, even bloody in his anger, but it soon subsided, and his women did what they chose ; he was a puppet moved by wires. His mother, the Sultana Fatima, had inspired him with the highest opinion of the women of Europe, and probably I had been purchased to satisfy this curiosity. He did me the honor to cast his eyes on me, and I might have risen to the highest dignities

in the seraglio ; but I soon perceived his weakness. Whenever I had yielded to my oppressors it was from necessity—choice had no share in my submission. I determined to be virtuous, though in a harem ; and for some months I succeeded in keeping him at a distance. I was indeed more than once confined on bread and water in a dark room, but I was always released at the intercession of Ibrahim, the chief eunuch. This officer was the best creature in the world ; all the women liked him, he was so gentle and kind ; when, suddenly, we missed him ! it was whispered in the harem that he had been strangled by the Sultan's orders. Since this the barbarian Selim tyrannised over us. Three days before the arrival of the Nairs, I was confined in a separate apartment. I expostulated with Selim, but he, haughty as cruel, would not condescend to explain his reasons to a woman. We know now, my dear brother, that your appearance had recommended

this precaution. The crafty eunuch had probably set his spies round you for some days before, but would not secure you till taken in the fact. At length some of his creatures entered my confinement, and thrust me into a meal-sack. I imagined that some journey was in contemplation. All that I had formerly suffered between Aleppo and Bagdat was still fresh in my memory. But conceive my tortures—instead of being placed upright, I was flung across the saddle. I had swooned away, when the guard stopped us. The violence with which I was cast on the pavement, and the loss of blood restored my senses only to lose them a second time!—but, O Walter! how great is the mercy of Heaven—I opened my eyes on you—my long lost brother!”

“My dear Emma,” said De Grey, looking stedfastly in his sister’s face, “without doubt it will give you pleasure to hear that Ibrahim, this kind, this gentle eunuch, lives. He was delivered

at the very moment when the mutes had placed the fatal cord about his neck ; he has arrived at Calicut, where he boasts of the affections of an Englishwoman."

"Probably he means me," answered Emma, with the greatest simplicity ; " I offered to marry him, if he would deliver me out of the harem. However unsightly his figure, his character was so good. Since the loss of my liberty, I had only changed the accomplices of my dishonor ; a marriage with a eunuch would have been preferable to a criminal intercourse with a man."

Walter.

How short-sighted is our wisdom here ! Cherishing the idea of virtue, you were about to sin, perhaps, for the first time in your life. Population is the end of marriage—and every connection contrary to that end is criminal ; but, while we detest these unnatural marriages that are usual in Persia, can we absolve our own country from blame ? Our own laws

permit the blooming victim of vanity or ambition to bury herself alive in the arms of decrepid age! and is not such a union equally useless to the state?—equally contrary to nature? But enough of this odious subject. Your very error was meritorious, it was a sacrifice to your principles of virtue. Emma, you must become a mother.

Emma.

A mother! Who would marry me? No, Walter! you can never rejoice in my deliverance—you can never behold me without abhorrence; no, far better were it, had my heart-strings burst with my sufferings—had I remained buried in my captivity—had my tortures expiated the slip of my early youth. If, when betrayed, perhaps by the very virtues of my unhappy seducer—if I then waked your indignation and deserved your reproaches, dare I now ever raise my eyes in your presence? All your endearments, all your caresses, since our meeting, have

been so many daggers in my heart ! Now you know the whole extent of my guilt, you will—you must leave me here ; my tears may wash out the stain of my virtue, but nothing—nothing can clear my reputation ! Among strangers, I can be no disgrace to the De Greys : you can never think of returning to England with a dishonored woman !

Walter.

No, Emma, you shall never return to England ! but a generous nation, who know to pity your misfortunes and respect your virtues, are prepared to receive you with open arms. Yes, Emma, you are virtuous ; you always were so, and always deserved to be happy. I hope you, as well as myself, will be cured of your chimeras, and then you will be happier than I. You will remember them without remorse : your prejudices made you only unhappy ; mine rendered me criminal : yours bathed your pillow with tears ; mine dyed my hands with the blood

of a fellow-creature ! O my dear Emma ! could you have looked into my heart, since the murder of your lover, you would have pitied the author of all your miseries. You have been unhappy, in solitude, ill-treatment, and captivity ; but, in the noise of dissipation, in the splendor of the court, in the circle of my friends, in the arms of my beloved, my conscience has raised the bloody image of my friend ! But for mercy's sake, if you love me, never mention his name, nor wake the serpents of my remorse ! To him I can never repair my injustice ; but perhaps the ghost of the generous man may rejoice at the asylum that I have procured for you."

Here De Grey proceeded to describe Indostan and the customs of the Nairs. He detailed his connections and expectations at the court of the Samorin ; and declared his intentions of establishing at Calicut, where he proposed that his sister

should assume the green girdle, and become a mother of heroes.

Emma.

No, Walter, I am convinced that you are only putting my principles to the proof. My long sufferings have not destroyed my morality ; though unworthy of its tenets, I have not abjured the faith of my country. There is a difference between religion and superstition.

Walter.

“ We call Religion what ourselves believe,
And Superstition what’s believed by others.”

Every people imagines its faith the true one. You have lived among Mahometans and Papists ; you have seen the vices of convents, and of harems ; you have found abbés and dervises equally immoral ; you have been ill-treated by bigots and by sceptics. God knows which religion is right ; but that one is proba-

bly the most perfect, which is the most beneficent ; and that must be the most pleasing to God, which is the most useful to man. Think not, my dear Emma, that I wish to offer you to every new comer ; you may be as constant in Calicut as elsewhere. Let every thing go the way of nature. If constancy be natural, it will subsist of itself—if inconstancy be natural, it cannot be pernicious—the law of nature is the law of God. Suppose, my dear Emma, you should find in Malabar a new lover, equally worthy and amiable as your first, would not you love him with constancy without being obliged to do so by law ?”

Walter was silent ; Emma’s heart was so full, she could not contain her emotions—her distrust for her brother had vanished ; she pressed closer to him, and reposed her head on his shoulder.

Meanwhile the cavalcade approached the Indus, which divides the two empires.

What a difference between its two banks ! the Persian side bleak, barren and uncultivated ; the Indian, enriched with the golden harvest, enlivened with cheerful villages, embellished with elegant villas.

As the De Greys' camel would enter the ferry, a custom-house officer stopped them. They were surprised that, instead of examining their luggage, he only asked to look at Emma's hand ; Walter inquired the reason. "This," answered he, "is the spot, where our fore-mothers, at the instigation of Samora, cast their marriage-rings into the river *. Chains are composed of rings ; and in the land of liberty we permit no badges of slavery."

As the boat reached the opposite shore, a Nair sprang into it ; it was the Baron of Naldor. He welcomed his friend De Grey to his maternal country,

* See vol. i. page 26, of this work.

and presented him a diploma, bound in crimson velvet, to which hung, in a golden case, a seal of the Imperial Phoenix.

At that instant was heard a discharge of artillery. "Long life," cried Naldor, "to the Count and Countess of Mangalore."



BOOK XII.

ARGUMENT.

The son, whom Agalva had been forced to abandon at Kandahar, discovered---The suicide of the eunuch Ibrahim---The description of Mahomet's Paradise and Hell---The Princes of the empire swear allegiance to the children of Agalva---The diet of Princes---Lacy condemned to be beheaded---Intrigues of the Sultana Fatima---The prerogative of the Princesses of the blood of Semiramis---The heroic achievement of Walter de Grey---The return of Agalva---Walter and Emma loaded with honors and dignities.

BOOK XII.

A NUMBER of carriages waited to receive the De Greys, and the other captives, delivered by the prowess of the Nairs. On the other side of the river they seemed transported into a new world. The frontier town, how superior to a Mahometan city. There the narrow alleys are darkened by the domestic prisons on each side, and rendered more horrible by the general silence and desolation ; while at intervals, a grated window, scarcely perceivable under the roof, fills the soul with ideas of slavery and confinement. But in the towns of Indostan the streets are spacious and airy, and the houses en-

livened by windows filled with human faces. The De Greys could have fancied themselves in Europe, and the whole seemed like a dream to their fellow-travellers. A band of musicians preceded their carriages, and, among the acclamations of the people, they arrived at the house of the commandant, who entertained them instead of the prince of the province, who had departed for Calicut to do homage to Osva.

Naldor had brought De Grey a letter from Firnos; but the curiosity of the inhabitants to see him and his sister was so great that he had no leisure to open it till the middle of the banquet.

“ Firnos, son of Agalva, to Walter, son of Gertrude.

“ My dear friend, I have much to say, I know not where to begin. How I regret that your wounds prevented you from accompanying Lacy and myself:—but let me observe some method in this letter,

or I shall certainly forget some occurrence. I must commence at our last separation.

“ Your countryman, Lacy, rode like a mad-man, and I was ashamed to be out-done. You know how execrable the Persian roads are ; we ran a risk of breaking our necks at every step. I never saw such an unaccountable fellow in my days. Young Englishmen are generally wild ; but he is old enough to have grown steady. The escort could scarcely keep pace with us. At length, we passed the Indus, and continued our route in a carriage ; Lacy was perpetually flinging his money to the postilions to accelerate their speed ; he did nothing but talk of the Malabar women the whole way.

“ I will not describe the emotion of my uncle, the Samorin, at my mother’s history. Though he had long before imagined her swallowed up by the ocean, he was at one moment sunk in despair at the probability of her death ; at another,

furious for revenge, he grasped his sword and vowed to extirpate the whole race of Mussulmans ; again a ray of hope brightened his prospects, and the certainty, that she had escaped the waves, flattered him with the possibility of her surviving any subsequent disaster.

“ That evening, I was not disposed for company ; but I had promised Lacy to introduce him to our ladies. We entered the hall, and found Fitz-Allan in the midst of the circle. The polite Fitz-Allan seems not to regret Saint James’s. The ‘meridian’ of his life is over, and yet, I believe, he is at half the toilets in Calicut. How unexpected was the appearance of his old friend and fellow-student ; each flew into the other’s arms, and Fitz-Allan was so overjoyed that he forgot to make his friend a compliment on the occasion.

“ You may conceive the general curiosity to see Lacy, the fellow-traveller of my unhappy mother. The news of our

arrival spread like wild-fire; dames, cavaliers, the whole court, the very servants, every one had some question, and Lacy was perplexed to answer them all. The account of my brother's murder raised a general indignation. The populace were furious, they already paraded the streets, in troops, to the sound of martial music, and only required a commander to lead them immediately against Kandahar.

“ A tumult was heard in the palace-yard, and the black eunuch ran into the hall; it was long before he recovered his breath to speak intelligibly, ‘Hasten, hasten, ye Nairs,’ cried he, ‘the mob is about to tear into pieces the Prince of Kandahar, to avenge the death of Agalva's child.’ All the cavaliers present hastened to the spot. With our drawn swords we forced our way through the crowd; the deluded multitude imagined that we rather came to assist than to oppose their intentions :—‘Cut him in quarters,’ cried they,

‘let each limb decorate a standard of the Phoenix.’

“By torch-light, they distinguished me, and retired respectfully. ‘Give the wretch into my hands,’ cried I, ‘I also am Agalva’s son—I am the brother of your murdered prince! Indulge me with the satisfaction of revenging him. But acts of justice shun not the light of the day, let us defer his punishment till to-morrow.’

“By this artifice I rescued him out of their hands, and we returned with him half dead with fear into the hall.

“Lacy fixed his eyes upon Abas, as he sat panting for breath. ‘Gracious heaven!’ cried he, ‘behold the son of Agalva! whom your mob were about to sacrifice, to revenge his own death!’

“‘Osmin!’ cried the eunuch, starting.

“‘Yes,’ answered Lacy, casting himself into the eunuch’s arms, ‘I am that Osmin! whose life you spared, when you found me disguised in Almeida’s chamber.’

“ The whole company regarded them and Abas by turns. The Samorin, who had entered the hall, trembled with impatience to learn the truth. ‘Sire,’ said Lacy, turning to him, ‘behold your nephew! The dastardly Sultan, lest the Nairs should fly to her rescue, had obliged your sister to conceal her rank and nation—Almeida was the name assumed by Agalva, and Abas is Agalva’s son.’

“ What universal joy at this discovery. The Samorin clasped the young Persian to his bosom, who wildly stared, without comprehending the meaning of his caresses.

“ Thus my uncle has found a nephew, I a brother; the succession of Samora’s race is strengthened; Osva and Abas, the two children of Agalva, are restored; but where is their unhappy mother?

“ This new discovery was immediately known in every quarter of the capital; a proclamation was issued, to satisfy the

public curiosity, and in the morning the same populace, who would probably have assembled to demand Abas's death, came now,—how singular the change! with a band of music, and desired to be permitted to feast their eyes on this new descendant of Semiramis.

“ But this same worthy eunuch, whose humanity saved my brother's, and probably my mother's and Lacy's life, is not more. He had received from nature one of the tenderest hearts—a heart formed for love! Mahometan jealousy had robbed him of the faculties, but could not deaden the wishes—could not divest him of the feelings of a man. You know that in Persia women are frequently given in marriage to eunuchs; but my countrymen had in vain represented to him that so unnatural a union would never be tolerated at Calicut.

“ The night of my arrival, on discovering our many obligations to him, I renewed to him my offers of friendship

and protection ; when the deluded wretch inquired after your sister Emma, and confessed that he still flattered himself that she would keep her promise. I could not encourage his hopes ; I represented to him, that, however grateful she undoubtedly was to him for his good treatment—however affected by his good-will, she must fulfil the first of her duties, that of becoming a mother ; and that every connection, not conducive to population, is criminal. He seemed sorrowful and dejected after supper ; he embraced Abas, and burst into a flood of tears. The following morning he was found with his throat cut, and weltring in his blood. How the philanthropy of enthusiasts misleads your English parliament, who think that the abolition of their slave-trade would better the situation of the negroes. Can the number of those slaves that are transported to their islands, be compared to the multitudes who pine away their lives in the harems of Asia and

Africa * ? In Jamaica they are slaves, but slaves of enlightened masters ; they even enjoy a freedom in love, which their masters enjoy not : whereas, on this side of the Atlantic, they are the slaves of ignorant and brutal domestic tyrants ; no endearments of love to enlighten their chains, and, being castrated, their number must be ever recruited.

“ Just before he put a period to his existence, he wrote a letter to Abas, which, on account of its singularity, I will inclose to you.

“ Had Abas affected any airs on account of his relation to the Sultan his imaginary father, it would not have been difficult to have laughed him out of his pretensions, for, as Lacy was then in his full vigor, and the Sultan a decrepid doatard, it is more

* A Golconde, on opéra en une fois jusqu'à vingt-deux mille de ces infortunés. Les plus fameux sont Ethiopiens : ils sont si hideux, que les jaloux les paient au poids de l'or.

likely that Abas was the son of the slave than of the master ; but, perhaps, neither of them was his father, for who can pretend to say how many lovers my mother had ? Abas, however, on the eunuch's death, made no scruple to lay aside the turban ; and now he lets slip no occasion to launch a bon mot against Mahomet, and his white horse, and the beauties of musk ; and no emir could be prouder of his green turban, of his sacred birth, and of his relation to the Prophet, than Abas is at present of his divine origin, and of his descent from Semiramis.

“ But I fear it will be long before he is worthy to be invested with the Phoenix, and to bear arms in the defence of the rights of women. He has already offended half the ladies of the court, by loudly declaring the inferiority of their sex. Your countryman Lacy once astonished the whole company by kneeling at a woman's feet ; my sublime bro-

ther, falls into a contrary extreme. Upon discovering his imperial birth, he, in the true spirit of sultanism, threw his handkerchief to a lady of quality ; at first she could not comprehend his meaning, but on its being explained to her, she very properly flung it into the fire. Would you believe it ? the arrogant boy came to the Samorin to complain of the imaginary affront.

“ The day is fixed for the Princes of the empire to do homage to Osva and to Abas. My sister was desirous to defer the ceremony, till some light should be thrown on her mother’s fate ; but my uncle, for fear of accidents, is determined not to defer it, particularly as Fitz-Allan is here to explain the circumstances of Osva’s discovery, and Lacy to reveal the mystery of Abas’s birth. How singular ! two Englishmen to give evidence at Calicut in such an important cause. As to your two countrymen ; Fitz-Allan dances the best minuet at court, and Lacy is in Paradise,

he cannot longer count his *bonnes fortunes* on his fingers.

“ But I know you, Walter ; in your opinion, wedlock is not so much the tomb of love, as of ambition. A wife is a dead weight, which retards one’s progress in the path of glory. You left your natal country not to rove from beauty to beauty ; pleasure is, in your eyes, a secondary good ; you wish to arrest the admiration of your cotemporaries, and to survive in the memory of posterity. Those who inherit our name and honors are the living monuments of our renown ; but the worthies of this country stoop not to build their own monuments ; they only exert themselves to achieve acts of heroism, and to acquire dignities to grace them. Like so many phœnixes, the children of their sisters step forward, as if it were from their ashes, to represent them. Walter, I know the wishes of your heart, and my uncle is desirous to open to your talents a wide field of exertion ; he therefore invests

you and your sister Emma with one of the best counties in Malabar. Let the imaginary kinsman of William the Conqueror become the uncle of a race of heroes. Your mother's name, if I remember well, was Gertrude; I salute you, Walter Gertrudin, Count of Mangalore.

“Without losing a moment, continue your route to Calicut; on the same festival when the Princes swear allegiance to Abas and Osva, you and your sister may do homage for your fief. My dear friend, I can write no more; it is midnight. I must be on the parade to-morrow with the sun, to exercise the vassals of Malabar. The whole empire is in arms; fire and sword must ravage Kandahar. Unhappy mother! we must burst thy prison, or thy grave must float in blood.

“Tell the Countess, your sister, how impatient the whole court is to see her. Your old friend Naldor will meet you on the frontiers, and give you this letter.

“Farewell, Walter Gertrudin; may your nephews be brave, and your nieces be fruitful.

“FIRNOS AGALVIN.”

As Walter finished reading the letter, the whole company rose, and, waving their glasses, drank success to the Count, and a numerous posterity to the Countess of Mangalore. At length Naldor announced the carriage; Walter offered a place in it to Roxana.

Walter's mind was too much engrossed with his own prospects, to think of any thing else; but one day he happened to lay his hands on the eunuch's letter; he read it aloud to his sister Emma, as the carriage proceeded on its way.

To the sublime Abas, Prince of Kandar, from Ibrahim, the chief of the black eunuchs, his slave.

“Abas, the Sultan, thy father, was the sword-bearer of the prophet, and the

image of the only God ; continue, therefore, to be the delight of the faithful. Thy slave casts himself in the dust at thy feet, and presumes to raise to thee the voice of advice.

“ I saved thy life, and hoped I did well ; but the sons of earth are blind, and perhaps I committed a crime. Hadst thou perished then, thou wouldst have entered paradise ; but if thou becomest an apostate to the religion of our prophet, thou wilt be plunged into hell. Thou hast not yet cast aside the turban, but I fear thy constancy is the offspring of pride, not the daughter of faith. A Prince of Kandahar was loath to become an obscure Indian ; but now that thou art acknowledged an imperial Prince in this land of infidels, I tremble lest vain-glory should seduce thee from the right way.

“ O Abas ! born among the true believers, reflect on the day of judgment, when the scales shall be weighed by the

angel Gabriel ; when the just shall receive with his right hand the book of his past life, and the sinner the book of his condemnation with his left. The unrighteous will be hurled into hell, and the whole earth will become a loaf of bread, which God will present as a cake to the righteous.

“ Remember that hell has seven stories, one below the other ; and that each story is guarded by nineteen angels. Exquisite are the pains and torments in each, and he whose punishment is the lightest, will be shod with shoes of fire, the heat of which will cause his skull to boil like a cauldron. But who can conceive the horrors of these dwellings of woe ? I seem to smell the brimstone, and to hear the gnashing of teeth. Burning volcanos vomit the sinner on seas of ice. But in the six first stories there is a possibility of redemption ; after the lapse of some thousand years, the wrath of the prophet may be softened, and he may intercede

for every crime, from theft to parricide : but the gates of the last story are eternally closed ; there infidels and apostates are punished for ever.

“ Such are the terrors of hell : but how great are the delights of paradise. O Abas, may they be destined for thee ! Paradise is in the seventh heaven, the nearest to the throne of God ; its soil is of the purest musk, its stones are pearls and jacinths, its springs and fountains flow in beds of camphire and murmur over rocks of ruby and emerald : and its rivers are of milk, of wine and of honey, and spring from the tree of happiness.

“ All its trees are of gold, but none so remarkable as this ; it stands in the palace of Mahomet, but a branch will reach to the house of every true believer ; it produces pomegranates and grapes and dates, and other fruits of surprising size, and of tastes unknown to mortals ; and when a Mussulman shall gather one of

these sacred bunches, an other bunch shall cry out, “ I am a better bunch, take me, and bless God through me.” This tree will supply him also with silk garments ; and beasts ready saddled and bridled, and adorned with rich trappings, will burst forth from its fruits ; and so large is this tree, that the fleetest horse in a thousand years could not gallop across its shade.

“ And the meanest inhabitant of paradise will see his gardens and houses fill the space of a thousand years’ journey. He will wear bracelets of gold and of silver, and a crown of pearl ; he will inhabit a large tent of pearl, of jacinth, and of emerald. He will be served at meals by three hundred attendants ; three hundred meats in golden dishes will compose each course. He will taste of so many liquors in golden vessels, and the wine of paradise inebriates not ; and these repasts shall cause no satiety, for the blessed are not subject to satiety, but after

a sweat sweeter than musk, his appetite will return.

“ Moreover, the ravishing voice of the angel Israfil, the most melodious of God’s creatures, and the bells hanging on the trees, and the clashing of their golden branches, when agitated by a wind proceeding from the throne of God, will form for him a concert exceeding whatever mortals have heard.

“ And surely, Abas, for the love of these Nairresses, with their naked faces, thou wilt not renounce the company of the Houris? For each of the blessed will, beside eighty thousand slaves, and any of his earthly wives whose society he should desire, possess seventy-two Houris; and these Houris are not created of clay, but of musk; they are free from all natural impurity, and from every defect; they are of the strictest modesty, and are secluded from the public view in pavilions of hollow pearls, sixty miles square.

“And God will give him the force of a hundred men, to qualify him for the full enjoyment of paradise : he shall enjoy perpetual vigor, and reach the size of Adam, sixty cubits in height ; and if he desire issue, it shall be conceived, born, and full-grown in the space of an hour ; otherwise his wives shall not conceive. And should he be fond of gardening, whatever he sows will spring up and come to maturity in a moment.

“Thou, Abas, in the midst of infidels, canst not have recourse to the word of our prophet ; I have therefore painted these rewards and punishments, to strengthen thee in the right path. I am on the threshold of death, therefore thou mayest believe my voice. I have no prospect of happiness in this world ; I cannot live with or without women. In Persia, a woman might be married to a eunuch ; here it were a crime. It is said in the Koran, “The Almighty created women to be the comfort and bane of

men ;” but to me they never were a comfort ; alas ! they have been my bane. It is they who drive me to the crime that I am about to commit ; but the prophet will pardon me for the sake of thy soul, which, with my dying breath, I conjure thee to save. O Abas, have the fear of hell before thy eyes ; I, who saved thy life, let me save thy soul also.”

“ See, Emma,” said Walter, putting up the letter, “ this Mahometan also is convinced of the truth of his faith ; and certainly, if the plurality of voices were a proof of truth, his religion would obtain the preference over every other : he thinks polygamy as reasonable as our countryfolks think monogamy ; but the obstinacy with which every sect maintains its own religion, should lead the wise to doubt, at least, of the superiority of their own. The customs and opinions of every nation may be false, but those which in this country only embellish,

without altering the course of nature, are the most likely to be true."

As horses were waiting for them ready harnessed at every stage, the whole court was astonished that the De Greys arrived not at Calicut on the day of the Inauguration. Firnos was convinced that some accident had befallen them.

On this solemn day the princes drew their swords, and swore to spill the last drop of their blood in defence of the birthrights of Abas and of Osva. Afterward Osva, in the temple of Semiramis, officiated for the first time as a Samorina. She invested the youths of Calicut with the sword, while the Samorin decorated the virgins with the green girdle.

A magnificent ball was given that evening at court; Cora, the young Countess of Raldabar, and Prince Abas, engaged the eyes of the whole company. Cora had reached her sixteenth year, and was the beauty of her age. On this festival she had exchanged the white girdle of

purity for the green girdle of hope ; and many a youth, who had shared the gambols of her childhood, had looked forward to this day, when, encircled by her arms and reposing on her bosom, he might learn and teach the lessons of love. Abas also had distinguished her superiority among the virgins of the court, but his overbearing manner had disgusted her ; and he, so proud of the imaginary pre-eminence of his sex, had had for a long time the mortification of seeing all his companions preferred to himself. His haughty spirit took fire, but his indignation availed him not, the free-born damsel defied his wrath ; and on hearing the affair of the handkerchief, and his insolent behavior to the lady of quality, the young people came together, and had agreed to expel him from their little parties. For some days he had been solitary in the most crowded assemblies ; he had stalked along the hall like a ghost ; no damsel would notice him, none would

dance with him : at length Cora had pitied him, and prevailed on her companions to invite him to join in their plays.

By degrees his character had grown more pliant ; perhaps love had softened his temper : he had become affable and polite, and the damsels had forgot his former faults : yet he had sat hour after hour with his eyes fixed on Cora, and Cora had perceived, and was secretly pleased with this preference ; but the word love had never passed his lips. The Inauguration was over, and the other squires and damsels who, on this occasion, had become knights and dames, and had received the sword or green ribbon, had already made their engagements for the night of their emancipation. Still the sultanic pride of Abas felt an aversion to request any thing from so inferior a being as a woman. Other youths had made her the proposal, but Cora, still hoping for a de-

claration from Abas, had constantly given them a refusal.

He had danced with her the minuet and the country dance ; there was something so melancholy, so expressive, so wistful in her look, that seemed to reproach his coldness ; and yet love had not yet triumphed over pride, nor prevailed on him to stoop to a request. It was an amusement for the court to observe the two passions struggling in his breast. He could not longer contain his emotion ; he quitted the ball-room, to bury his trouble in the solitary walks of the garden. Firnos, who had never lost sight of him, followed him, and proceeded to inquire into what he knew already, the secret cause of his sadness during a festival which formed one of the happiest epochs of his life.

Abas.

Brother, I love the young Countess of Raldabar.

Firnos.

Then you must lose no time ; she has just received the green girdle, and is probably occupied with the choice of a lover. You must disclose your love, and request the return of hers.

Abas.

What ! I request—I degrade myself so far ? — I, a prince, beg a favor of a subject ?—I, a man, put myself on a level with a woman ?—No ; I will order my attendants to seize her—I will force her——

Firnos.

Hush ! let not a word of the kind escape you ; the very idea might deprive you of your rights to the throne. Such an act of violence were a capital crime ; not even your imperial birth would save you.

Firnos takes his brother by the hand, and re-conducts him to the ball-room. The valse was just beginning—he sees a young Nair advancing toward her, to

request her hand. Cora never appeared so lovely to him as at that moment in her green girdle. Farewell, pride—love, the field is thine! Abas brushes through the crowd, and prevents his rival. “May I have the pleasure of valseing with you, Cora?” Overcome with joy, Cora sinks into his arms.

The good Samorin also saw with pleasure the conversion of his nephew; but, ah! nothing but the presence of Agalva could complete his happiness. He had appointed the following day for the House of Princes to deliberate on her loss.

The hall of this illustrious senate was magnificent in its structure, and venerable for its antiquity; and the remembrance of the many remarkable decrees which had issued from its walls, inspired the beholder with a religious awe. On each side the most eminent artists had represented those actions which reflected the most honor on the national history. The busts and statues of worthies and heroes,

of the benefactors of the world, and the vindicators of the Nair system, encouraged the ambition of their nephews; and the various trophies ravished from the oppressors of women, fanned the flame of hatred against the hereditary enemies.

In their robes of scarlet and ermine, the princes enter the hall of their fore-uncles. It is a council of sovereigns; each wears a crown on his head. From the most distant parts of the empire, from the banks of Indus to the frontier of China, from the mountains of Thibet to the Cape Comorin, every prince had quitted his dominions at the summons of his paramount lord: they take their seats according to the priority of their titles. Some of them were descended from the sisters of those heroes who, four thousand years before, had followed Semiramis from Babylon; others owed their dignity to the merits of uncles of a more modern date. The galleries, always enthusiastic

in the favor of their Emperor, re-echoed with applause. The Samorin, having bent his knee before the golden statue of his divine ancestress, ascends his elevated throne, the canopy of which is decorated with the imperial phoenix; and thus the chief of the empire addressed the assembly.

“ Illustrious peers, descendants of free women, and nephews of heroes, ye who have spread the terror of our name through all Asia, and raised our nation above the other nations of the globe, behold an opportunity to rival the courage of your foreuncles, in defence of that liberty which was the glory of your mothers, and shall be the inheritance of your sisters and nieces. The alacrity with which you have obeyed my summons, has inspired me rather with gratitude than with surprise; for your patriotism and military ardor are known. I need not remind you of the indignities that a countrywoman has suffered; how many years

the horrible walls of a seraglio have been bathed with her tears, and the surrounding hills re-echoed to her plaints. Robbed of every object that could comfort a reasonable being—ignorant of the welfare of her dearest relatives—unable to superintend the education of her children; such have been the torments of the unfortunate Agalva. She, endowed with so much natural and acquired excellence, has been herded with vile dancing-girls and concubines, and been confided to the vigilance of eunuchs still viler than they; she, who was born to enjoy the unrestrained commerce of love, has been submitted to the beck of a brutal Mahometan; and a free princess of the Nair empire has been insulted with the mimic honors of a sultana. But why should I remind you of her imperial birth, or of her divine origin? Had she been the meanest of my vassals, she would have had the justest claim on your protection; and the peers of Indostan would have assumed those

arms in her favor, which they have grasped with such alacrity in the cause of a Samorina. Ah! happy, comparatively happy should we be, had we any prospect of ending her calamities; but, my lords, let us not flatter ourselves with such hopes: no—we are reduced to the melancholy duty of revenging her foul murder. I have summoned you, therefore, to beg the assistance of your advice and military experience; and never, since the legislation of Samora, was the nation ever visited by such a calamity. Oh! thou Creator of all the worlds, Lord of heaven and of earth; thou, whose immovable and glorious throne obscures the sun, the moon, and the stars; thou, who rulest the vast and raging ocean with so much ease as a drop of the morning dew; thou, whose supreme power could annihilate the universe, we implore thy protection, succor, and help: hear us, pity us, and grant our prayers. It was by thee that Samora was inspired to re-establish the

laws of nature. Oh! if, in obedience to her commands, we have endeavored to execute justice, and to deliver the weak women from the power of their oppressors, let not her descendant mourn longer in the prisons of their lust. Strengthen us to deliver her also; but if she be already fallen the victim of their malice, let the land of the infidels groan beneath our chariot-wheels, and our neighing coursers trample it under their hoofs. At the intercession of Samora at the footsteps of thy throne, fortify our avenging arm; baffle the bloody projects of the polygamists, and scare them with the eye of thy wrath. Reduce the oppressors of women into dust; let the ploughshare pass over the walls of Kandahar, let its streets float in the blood of its males, but let its mothers and its daughters be free. Let the breath of victory swell the banners of the phoenix, and the temple of Samora shall resound with praises and thanksgivings to thee."

Such was the speech from the throne ; and the lofty roof still re-echoed to the sound, when a flourish of trumpets was heard, and a herald introduced an ambassador from the Sultan of Kandahar ; it was the Mirza, governor of Mansor, the frontier town on the Persian side of the Indus. He prostrated himself before the throne, and thus addressed the chief of the empire.

“ Invincible Samorin, to thee an unhappy sovereign raises his folded hands ; may thy heart, that never trembled in the embattled field, be melted to pity ! The Nairs are masters of his capital, the phoenix is planted on the walls of his seraglio ; himself, a wretched exile in Ispahan, lives on the charity of the Persian Shah : but his protector trembles at thy name, and this asylum will be denied him, if he continue the object of thy wrath.

“ It was the late Sultan, his father, who provoked thy indignation ; my present

master never sinned against thee. The Princess Agalva, thy sister, passed through Kandahar; the old monarch, in his dotage, was struck by her fatal charms, and could not resist a passion arising from such superiority of beauty. Love-sick, he deviated from the path of justice, he forgot the faith of treaties, and confined her within the walls of his harem; even he was weak as he was criminal: but when the present Sultan succeeded to his throne, he opened the gate of his harem, and bade the Princess depart in peace. She was accompanied by a European, a vile slave, a vagabond, who, having exhausted the charity of the West, sought in Asia a new theatre for his villainy. Is it the fault of the Sultan, that Agalva misplaced her confidence? that the miscreant was capable of imbruing his hands in the blood of his benefactress? They departed alone, for the Princess, probably at the persuasion of her companion, refused an escort.

“Some days after, I was interrupted in my divan at Mansor; a slave entered, breathless and trembling; horror was in his countenance. He cast himself prostrate at my feet. “Hasten,” cried he, “mirror of justice; thy district is polluted by foul murder. May the lightning of thy arm reach the guilty! This morning I was cutting wood in the neighboring forest, when I heard the trampling of horses, and I saw approaching on the road a woman; but was it a woman, or a genius, or a sultana (for I never saw a sultana, God avert from me such a misfortune); but she was not veiled, her face was naked; I never saw the like. She looked forward as if she were afraid of nothing; she bestrode a milk-white steed, and was followed by a single horseman. Concealed in the bushes, I gazed, and knew not what to think, when I saw the horseman draw forth a pistol; he fired, and she fell to the ground motionless, and without a groan. The ruffian

dragged her body into the thicket; unseen, I saw him stripping her of her ornaments. I left him digging a hole to bury her, and I hastened, unperceived, to denounce the outrage."

"After questioning the slave, I dispatched my guards, who seized the European as he was advancing on foot toward the town; the horses had probably escaped from him while he was burying his victim. On his passports being examined, he invented the miserable falsehood, that he had been attacked by robbers, who had seized and rode off with the Princess. I had him conveyed by a strong escort to Kandahar.

"His guilt is confirmed by the jewels, of an inestimable value, discovered in his garments. It is true, invincible Samorin, the Sultan ought to have delivered into thy hands the murderer of thy sister; but ah! the terror of the Nair name. He feared to be considered the cause of her fate; and though his father, not his

self, was the source of her grievances, he trembled at your national vengeance. The sublime Agalva was now dead, irrevocably dead; policy induced him to conceal her end. The Sultan would fain have made an example of her murderer, but policy here forbade too; he dreaded lest the horrid tale might transpire abroad; he ordered that the ruffian should be strangled in the silence of a prison; but his mother, the Sultana Fatima, who, being the daughter of a Venetian slave, is fatally prepossessed in favor of every European, condescended to intercede for him. The invincible chief of a nation so celebrated for its filial piety, knows that the request of a mother is a command; the Sultan mitigated his punishment into perpetual imprisonment, and not long after the generous Sultana, whose heart is always interested for the unhappy, procured his removal from his dungeon to a more commodious apartment.

“Invincible Samorin, the murderer is

in thy presence ; his unparalleled effrontery appears at thy court, and breaks the bread of thy hospitality ; but now that his hypocrisy is unmasked, behold the monster in his own deformity ; let him suffer the death of his deserts, let his devoted head fall. But ah ! confound not the innocent with the guilty ; restore to my master the throne and the seraglio of his ancestors, nor force him, a houseless exile, to rouse against thee the indignation of the faithful. Remember that the prophet was once an exile, but he returned with fire and sword."

Notwithstanding the menace with which it concluded, the Mussulman's speech produced its desired effect, for the Mirza was already known at Calicut ; he was considered a hero among his own countrymen, for small is the number of heroes among a nation where the women are slaves. It is the smiles and favor of their free countrywomen, that fire young warriors to hardy deeds of enterprise ; and

when two nations engage, the one whose women are the freest, will always triumph. Thus every Nair was a hero, and an object of terror to the Persians; but scarcely a Persian warrior ever merited the respect of the Nairs. The Mirza was among these few: being governor of a frontier town, the courage with which he had opposed the inroads of the phœnix, had gained him the admiration of every mother's son. The House of Princes was prepossessed in his favor, they heard him with deference; and as, in their generous opinion, truth and courage were inseparable, no one doubted his evidence.

Lacy and Fitz-Allan were standing on the footsteps of the throne, where they, as strangers, were allowed to be present at this remarkable session. Every eye was fixed on Lacy, confusion was marked on his countenance; every one considered it a sign of guilt. Fitz-Allan, with a kind of involuntary horror, retreated a step back from him. The Samorin seemed

undecided, till at length being awakened out of his reverie by a cry in the gallery, "Vengeance on the Englishman—on the murderer!" he gave orders to the captain of the guard to conduct him to the tower.

However, astonished at his not asserting his innocence, Fitz-Allan rather imputed it to absence of mind than to guilt, and ventured to speak in his favor. "Stranger," answered the Samorin, "have more confidence in our national justice; I doubt, but I wish that he may be innocent; and in that case he has nothing to fear."

The House of Princes was adjourned till the following day, when they were to sit in judgment on Lacy.

Unhappy Lacy! thou art to be tried before judges prepossessed against thee. Thou art an Englishman; thy nation are the oppressors of women, and the Nairs, though before not blind to thy personal merits, now suspect thee for thy nation's

sake. For the last time, perhaps, thou reposest on a bed of down, for the justice of the country still distinguishes between an accused and a convicted criminal; and though thy person be secured, thou still enjoyest in thy confinement every comfort: thy table is served from the imperial kitchen; thy countryman visits thee, to support thy drooping spirits; and any of thy female friends would have been permitted to sweeten thy solitude, for till proved guilty, thou art treated as innocent; but, alas! appearances are against thee, and no free-born Nairess can think without horror on the murderer of Agalva.

The following day Lacy was arraigned before the assembled princes; they heard his protestations, but, alas! he could offer no proofs of his innocence. He related the adventures and disappointments of his life; all the misfortunes, which before would have recommended him to their pity, now rendered him an

object of their suspicions ; every circumstance presented itself now in a different light : before, they considered him the victim of prejudice ; now an adventurer, capable of the darkest villainy, who, hardened by the persecutions of fortune, shuddered not at his ingratitude, nor hesitated to raise himself to a state of independence, by shedding the blood of his benefactress. But what scruples could be expected from an European ? The most generous of his nation would have sacrificed the liberty of a woman to their jealousy, this man had sacrificed her life to his avarice ; other Christians would have married her, this one murdered her. Agalva's jewels were produced by the Mirza, who asserted that they were found concealed in his garments. Lacy denied the fact.

These jewels passed from hand to hand, and were examined in the court. The Prince of Cambaya arose ; he seemed agitated, and seizing Lacy by his diamond-

studded sword-belt—"My lords," said he, "the prisoner may perhaps have the audacity to deny also that this sword-belt ever belonged to Agalva. Oh! it recalls to my memory so many past scenes—it reminds me of the magnitude of our loss. Oh! that the Princess had never confided in Europeans, but had remained at home among those who admired and loved her. At the age of ten I was sent by the princess, my mother, to the public school at Romaran. Oh, how happy was the period of my life passed at this beloved seminary! Seven years had flown away on the pinions of a golden dream, when one day I was fishing on the river which forms the boundary of the college; my light skiff glided over the rapid current, while my comrades on the banks were engaged in the pastimes of youth: a numerous shoal glided through the silver wave. I drew in my oars, I prepared my net, and was standing ready to cast it over the prey; my little vessel struck

against a hidden rock ; it jarred, I lost my balance, and fell headlong into the stream. Though an expert swimmer, I could move neither arm nor leg, both were entangled in the net. Fortunately, Agalva had bathed, and was dressing on the neighboring shore; quick as lightning she doffed her garment, and plunged into the wave. I was rising the third time, the gasp of death already distorted my countenance. She swam to me, she seized my hair, she dragged me to the bank ; motionless, senseless, I lay on the grass. The assistance of Agalva and of my school-fellows revived me ; I awoke—I found myself surrounded by my friends, the gallant youths and tender damsels, the partakers of my pleasures and of my studies ; each seemed anxious for my welfare. But who had saved me from the stream ? who had snatched me from the jaws of death ? None would mention the name of my guardian angel ; the sublime Agalva had given this injunction to her

companions ; she feared to humiliate me by the weight of the obligation : but the account of my escape was already spread, and the whole town had heard the name of my deliveress ; I alone was ignorant to whom my thanks were due.

“ The galloping of a horse was heard, swift as a dart it shot across the plain ; its flowing mane whistled in the wind, and the white foam trickled down its sides. Meva, my beloved Meva, then the joy of my heart, sprung from its back, and in speechless ecstasy flung her arms around my neck. “ Ah ! ” at length she cried, “ ah ! the pleasure to possess thee. But where is Agalva, where is she to whom I owe this blessing ? ” Agalva ran to meet her, Meva flew into her arms ; they were already the best, the sincerest friends. Tears sparkled in the eyes of both.

“ Agalva remained an other year at Romaran, of which her talents and good qualities rendered her the ornament and delight. The noble Naldor was already

her lover; Meva and myself remained mutually attached, and from that day we four were inseparable friends. At length the shape of Agalva increased; the whole college congratulated her. She returned to her mother, the late Samorina, and bore the hereditary Prince.

“Just before her fatal voyage, we four had hunted together in the forest at Virnapor. I had lately received as a present from one of my uncles this diamond-studded belt; an elegant hunting-sword hung to it. Agalva praised its workmanship, and I prevailed on her to accept it; it was a pledge of our eternal friendship.

“Can the European still presume to deny this sword-belt? which I, before the assembled peers of Indostan, in the presence of the supreme Samorin, and of the collected public of Calicut, most solemnly protest, by all that is dear to a Nair, by my own honor, by the glory of my uncles, and by the freedom of my

mothers, to be the same belt that I presented to the unfortunate Princess. My lords, let us pronounce sentence on her murderer."

Lacy answered, that if the belt had ever belonged to Agalva, it was unknown to him ; but he refused to explain how it had passed into his hands.

The princes arise, a melancholy silence reigns in the court. In a solemn procession they approach the throne, and resting his right hand on Samora's statue, each declares his opinion. The votes are unanimous ; the next morning Lacy must lose his head.

He was re-conducted to prison ; the guard was doubled, and patroles paraded the city. A popular tumult was to be dreaded ; the populace envied the unhappy Christian the short respite till the ensuing day ; they threatened to burst open his dungeon, and loyally sacrifice him to the manes of their Princess. Fitz-Allan had not the cruelty to forsake him ;

guilty or innocent, he deserved compassion. He conjured him to avow the truth. Again he was convinced that he could not be the assassin: the generous Fitz-Allan passed the whole night in tears and affliction, while Lacy seemed insensible of the fate that awaited him.

The sun scarcely illumined the mountains of Malabar, when the square before the tower was already crowded; through every avenue of the city a multitude flowed thither; the populace could not contain their impatience to see Lacy's head fall. The governor of the tower announced to him that the hour of his execution approached. Fitz-Allan, without explaining his motives, abruptly quits him, and hastens into the imperial presence.

He found there the ambassador of Kandahar, who was interceding for the exiled Sultan. Fitz-Allan casts himself at the Samorin's feet, and begs, at least, a reprieve for his countryman.

“ Arise,” said the Emperor ; “ you forget yourself ; a gentleman should bend his knee to no man. With what pleasure would I grant your request ; but here a delay were cruelty, not mercy. He is convicted on no common evidence ; the Mirza, one of the first heroes of the age, has appeared against him.”

“ And I hope,” said the Mirza, turning to the Briton, “ that my truth is unsuspected as my courage.”

Scarcely had he spoken, when a female in a Persian habit rushed through the body-guard ; her hair hung out of her turban. There was a wildness in her look—she panted for breath—it was the Sultana Fatima.

“ He is innocent,” cried she—“ Lacy is innocent !—Agalva, the Samorina, lives, if that miscreant has not murdered her.”

At this accusation the Mirza trembled, perhaps for the first time in his life ; his color changed.

“Wretch!” cried Firnos, seizing him by the collar, where is my mother?”

“For God’s sake!” continued Fatima, clasping the Samorin’s knees, “stop the execution; Lacy, my dear Lacy, is perhaps on the scaffold.”

“But my sister,” cried the Samorin—“you say my sister lives?”

“Villain!” repeated Firnos, still holding the Mirza, “where is my mother?”

“Your mother,” replied the Mirza in a faltering voice, “she is in my harem at Mansor.”

“But Lacy,” continued Fatima, “for heaven’s sake save him!”

An officer of the guard darted like lightning through the circle to stop the execution; Fitz-Allan followed him. Fatima, half wild, burnt also to loose his chains. “No,” said the Samorin, stopping her, “first inform us where is my sister?”

“Alas!” answered Fatima, “I am the source of all her sufferings. Shall I have

the courage to divulge our crimes? The Mirza is my accomplice; we have been the persecutors of Lacy and of Agalva. The Mirza alone knows what she has suffered; but I have brought the innocent Lacy perhaps to the scaffold. O that they may arrive in time to save him!

“ I am the Sultana Fatima, the favorite of the late Sultan; I governed his seraglio, I was the soul of every political measure. My influence satisfied my ambition, and reconciled me with the ennui of my degrading pre-eminence. Notwithstanding the restraint of the harem, the Mirza was my favored lover. Soon after, Agalva and Lacy were discovered at Kandahar, and confined within the walls of the harem. Lacy pleased me; my mother was a European. I resolved to remove the Mirza; at my recommendation he was appointed governor of Mansor. Lacy replaced him in my affections, and as I still kept my political influence, I saw without regret Agalva

preferred by the Sultan. Soon after my son ascended the throne, and sold or disposed of all the women of his father. Agalva received permission to return to Calicut, and Lacy was allowed to accompany her.

“Desperate at losing my lover, I wrote to the Mirza; I communicated to him a plot, abominable indeed. But why are women reduced to such expedients? The Mirza disguised some of his guards, and attacked the travellers as they passed through his government. They rode off with the Princess, whom he has confined in his own harem: then, under the pretext that it would be imprudent to leave the European at liberty, lest he should stir up the Nairs against us, he, as I had directed him, sent Lacy under an escort to Kandahar.

Oh, how happy I felt in repossessing him! I endeavored to sweeten his confinement; his reproaches, indeed, went to my heart: but ah! I loved him too

much to release him. He conceived Agalva in the power of a band of outlaws, and lamented her fate more than his own misfortune. Oh ! who but that hardened wretch could have accused him as her murderer ?

“ At length the Nairs were masters of the seraglio, and Prince Firmos opened the prison, where, unknown to my son, I confined Lacy for my pleasures. Suppress your rising indignation, O Samorin ! your haughty sex takes fire at the idea. But how many hundred women are confined in Persia, subjected to the caprices of one man ? I only acted by the right of reprisals.

“ With gratitude all the other women received their liberty ; I alone was a mother. Though it grieved me to separate from Lacy, I could not leave my son in his tribulation ; I retired with him to Is-pahan, and confessed to him our crimes.

“ Trembling at the vengeance of the Nairs, my son wrote to the Mirza, com-

manding him to release the Samorina. The Mirza answered, that that measure would only augment their fury; that they would never forget her wrongs; that Lacy was a heretic, who believed not in the prophet, and consequently there could be no crime in sacrificing him to our general safety: he proposed, therefore, to depart without delay for Calicut, and accuse him of Agalva's murder. Providence permitted this letter to fall into my hands; I trembled for Lacy. I escaped from Is-pahan, I have travelled night and day. Oh! if I should be too late to save him."

She was silent, she could not stop her tears; she walked up and down the hall with impatience.—"Oh! who will conduct me to Lacy?"

The thunder of artillery was heard. "Mercy!" cried the Samorin—"Fitz-Allan will arrive too late—Lacy is mounting the scaffold."

"Justice!" exclaimed the Sultana—

“it is too late for mercy.” She ran up to the Mirza, and plunged her poignard in his breast.

He fell; the shades of death closed his eyes. “God and his prophet,” he cried, “I die like a good Mussulman; my soul takes its flight to paradise. Lacy was innocent, but he was an infidel. Agalva lived when I left Mansor—she lived in fetters; she moistened with her tears the bread of misery. But I laugh at you, ye Nairs, even at the mouth of the grave—I shall meet your Princess there. In my way to Calicut, I foresaw that ye would wish to bury her in her maternal tomb; that I should be required to produce her body. I dispatched a slave to strangle her in prison.” His voice faltered, and he breathed out his guilty soul. The corpse lay weltering in its blood, but no one cast on it a regard.

The Samorin stood a motionless image of despair; tears of filial affection bedewed Firnos’s cheek; the Sultana was

frantic for the loss of her lover; the guards at length wrenched the poignard out of her hands.

A confused murmur is heard in the anti-chamber, and a tumultuous rabble rush into the hall.

“ Shall he live—the murderer of Agalva?” cried a hundred voices at once—“ the murderer of a Samorina live?—the abominable Christian!—Justice, or the vengeance of heaven. She was a descendant of Samora—a deluge of fire will consume our city.”

The Samorin at length collected himself, and their impatience permitted them to relate the event. Lacy had already mounted the scaffold, when Osva, either by accident or design, for perhaps she had a presentiment of her countryman's innocence, appeared in sight. Pregnancy at Calicut receives the same veneration which was paid to virginity in ancient Rome; and the princesses of the blood of Samora enjoy, when pregnant, that ho-

honorable privilege of the vestals; should they appear at an execution, their presence pardons the criminal. Fortunately for poor Lacy, Osva was pregnant, and her shape saved his life. The spectators were divided whether this right should screen so atrocious a felon, the murderer of one of Samora's descendants; a dispute ensued, the guards could scarcely protect the culprit till the Samorin should decide his fate.

“He is innocent,” cried the Samorin. “Providence has saved him, our national justice is not disgraced—there lies the murderer of Agalva!”

They saw the body of the Mirza, whom they had respected as a hero; but, alas! a hero can be a villain.

Meanwhile, Fitz-Allan and the officer had rescued Lacy out of the hands of the mob, and conducted him to the palace. “Generous Briton,” cried the Samorin, “can you forgive us?—your cruel imprisonment, your disgraceful trial, your un-

just condemnation?"—"Oh! if Agalva lived," answered Lacy, "I should have no memory for them all. I am free, I am in the land of liberty; but ah! only to be assured of Agalva's loss."

How great was the surprise of the people, to see in their Emperor's arms the very man who had just escaped from a scaffold.

Fátima advances towards Lacy. "Ah, Sultana!" cried he, "your last present nearly proved fatal to me; that sword-belt had once belonged to Agalva, and I was accused of having murdered her to secure this precious spoil. I could not reveal to the tribunal that I wore it as a mark of your friendship; you unfortunately had remained in the power of the Sultan, and he, had he suspected our amours, might have sacrificed even his mother to his punctilious honor."

The whole court shouted with admiration at this trait of Lacy's generosity; these were the sentiments of a Nair. The

Sultana cannot support her feeling, her joy and gratitude overpower her; she faints in his arms.

The attendants flew to her assistance, when a cavalier rushed through the crowd, and pointing to the corpse of the Mirza, "Woe," said he, "woe to the oppressors of women! Flourish the race of Samora!" The dejected Samorin lifted up his eyes—it was Walter de Grey. "Sovereign of the Nairs," said he, "I was hastening to do homage at the footsteps of your throne. In our way, a horseman rode against us like lightning; his foaming courser fell; our drivers could not stop their galloping steeds, we drove over him; our horses and carriage came down together: my sister was wounded in the fall. This accident detained us at a neighbouring castle; the noble landlady* received us with hospitality; a sur-

* Among the Nairs every house belongs to a woman. Vol. i. page 90.

geon was fetched to dress my sister's wounds.

“ The fallen horseman had fractured his scull ; it was a Persian slave belonging to the Mirza. A letter was found in the folds of his turban ; I had learned the Persian language during my captivity ; the letter was directed to Jamin, a creature of the Mirza, and who, in his absence, governed the fortress of Mansor. The Mirza directed him to demand the Samorina Agalva of the chief eunuch, and, having conveyed her out of the harem, to murder her, and bury her mangled body in the neighboring wood. To insure the eunuch's obedience, he was to produce the Mirza's ring, which was inclosed in the letter ; to this ring the whole seraglio would pay the most religious obedience.

“ I recommended my sister to the lady of the castle, and returned to the banks of the Indus.

“ I assumed a Persian habit, and arrived at the Mirza's seraglio ; at the sight

of the ring, the chief eunuch prostrated himself before me. ‘Voice of my master’s will,’ said he, ‘command, and we obey thee—thou art lord in the harem of Mansor.’ ‘Conduct me,’ answered I, ‘to the Samorina Agalva.’

“We passed through a long suite of chambers. At the sight of a man the women covered their faces, and scarcely ventured to look through their veils, till a eunuch drove them aside. We traversed a pleasure ground ; but can pleasure dwell between these gloomy walls ? At length we arrived at an old tower, which was built half in the river,

“ ‘Here,’ said the eunuch, ‘we punish our disobedient women ; they are confined here a day, or a week, or a month, according to the nature of their offence. Some are kept on bread and water, to others we administer bodily correction ; but as to this abominable Nairress, I have long expected that my master would have sent her a silken necklace. On her first

arrival here, she was perpetually exciting the women to rebellion ; but I and the other eunuchs were on our guard. At length we caught a lover in her cabin ; till this day we know not how he entered the harem. We impaled him before her eyes ; it was the only time I ever saw her shed a tear ; so proud a temper I never beheld ; yet, had she remained here, I would have broken her spirit. But tell me, whither art thou to transport her ?

“ My indignation would have betrayed me had I spoken ; I kept silence, and only pointed to my ring. ‘ Blessed be the Prophet !’ said he, folding his arms on his breast, ‘ I understand thee ; let the veil of mystery cover her fate ; I presume not to pry into the secrets of my master.’

“ Meanwhile we were mounting a dark and eraggy staircase ; frequently was heard a hollow groan, or the rattling of a chain. One female, as we passed, beat at the door of her cell. At length we ap-

proached the top of the tower ; even the extensive prospect of her lofty prison was allowed to the Princess but to aggravate her torments ; she was tantalized with the sight of the Indus, and extended her chain only to look at her maternal country. Now the air seemed impested, and such an odor struck our senses, we could scarcely breathe. The eunuch reposed his lantern and opened three huge padlocks. Good heaven ! what a sight !—there the Princess lay ! She, once such a prodigy of charms ; now want and despair had impaired every trace of beauty. Her eye, once so clear, so penetrating, now either stared dim and unmeaning in its socket, or half-closed too weak to support the light ! Her lips, pale and blue, betrayed those teeth, which once shone like a row of pearls. All her features wore the livery of death. This was Agalva, whose portrait I had admired at Virnapor, once the image of the blooming Osva. Stretched on a heap of straw, a coarse rug was cast

over her withered form. Oh, when ye hear her relate all her sufferings! The unfeeling Mirza had often come to insult her, while she lay chained to the headless carcase of her paramour. A eunuch, less barbarous than his comrades, had ventured to intercede in her favor; he was disgraced for his humanity, and the present monster placed over her. Now furious with rage, now sunk in despondency, she waited in vain the removal of the body. In * this hot climate, where instant corruption follows death, this body, once so fair and lovely in her eyes, the body of her beloved was now become an unsightly object of disgust; and yet far happier was her lover, he was beyond the power of their tyrant. Why had not death offered her the same asylum? Her tormentors had removed from her every instrument of destruction, and the scull of her lover had been con-

* See, in Campbell's Travels, the sufferings of the prisoners confined by Hyder Ali.

verted into a bowl ; out of this she was to recruit her fainting spirits.

“ As we entered she lay motionless, and wanted strength to drive away the myriads of insects bred in the putrid carcase ; they crawled over her face and hands, and buzzed round her languid body.

“ At length we transported her into purer air ; soon as her forces allowed her removal, I had her placed on a bier. At the sight of the ring the whole seraglio obeyed me ; the Mirza’s women sighed, and the cruel eunuchs exulted as they saw her conveyed away ; they imagined her led to instant execution. As to herself, sunk in apathy, she permitted me and the Nairs that I had brought in disguise with me, to dispose of her as we pleased. Her destiny seemed indifferent to her. We placed her in the boat—we darted over the Indus. I will not describe her raptures when she found herself free and in her maternal country : her health, even her beauty, has been almost mira-

culously restored to her. The following morning we began our journey; we found my sister's wounds cured at the castle where I had left her. Agalva and Emma are travelling in the same carriage; I mounted my horse to announce their arrival."

The Samorin could scarcely contain his transports till De Grey had finished; he fell into his arms, he would give words to his gratitude, but could not express a coherent sentence. The Sovereign of the Nairs wept like a child; Firnos also was in a delirium of joy; Osva ran to her apartments to fetch the infant Marina. So many events had succeeded, and so rapidly, so quick the transition from despondency to rapture, it seemed an enigma to the crowd. All that they could comprehend was that Agalva lived! The joyful tidings passed from mouth to mouth.

The folding door opens its wings of pride—Agalva reappears, she is attired

with a princely magnificence worthy of herself—worthy of a descendant of Semiramis ; the mothers' sons press around her to kiss her hand, or to touch the hem of her robe. Long confinement had faded the roses of her cheek, and care worn a furrow in her forehead ; but majestic was her deportment, and her eye had recovered its lustre, brighter than the gems in her imperial crown.

Her brother, her children are in her arms—each returns to share her caresses. What a revolution ! She, so lately in a loathsome prison, and now surrounded by such children, in the bosom of her family, in the maternal hall. She embraces her first-born, Firnos, who had defied, in the search of his mother, the stormy ocean. She feasts her eyes on Abas, whom she had imagined buried for ever within the walls of a harem ; and Osva holds up to her lips the little Marina—Osva, whose promising shape is a new source of gratulation. Fitz-Allan, from whom she had

separated in despair at the loss of her child, she beholds Fitz-Allan, her English lover ; the friend of her childhood, the Prince of Cambaya affectionately squeezes her hand. She is surrounded by all dear to her heart. She presses to her bosom the faithful Naldor, who had rescued her second son from instant destruction ; she felicitates him on his having broke the chain of wedlock. “ Lacy, my dear Lacy,” continued she, “ I persuaded you to leave your asylum at Calicut ; your attachment to me had nearly proved fatal to you ; my fair countrywomen must make you all the amends in their power. My friend, how many sufferings have I not caused you !”

“ No,” cried Fatima, casting herself at the Samorina’s feet, “ I was the guilty cause of all that ye both have suffered ; the loss of your liberty and your horrible imprisonment proceeded from my intrigues. Lacy may forgive me—to him I may plead the excess of my passion, but what

consideration will induce you to pardon me?"

"Arise, Sultana!" answered the descendant of Semiramis, raising her, "I accuse not you, but the tyranny of your customs—the prejudices of your religion. Why were you reduced to secrete a lover within the walls of a harem?—why were you obliged to intrigue for what you might have enjoyed as a birthright before the eyes of the whole world? You, Fatima, were less guilty than your prophet."

But who is the lady in the Samorina's train? Every eye has been too engaged with Agalva to notice her elegant companion. It is Emma de Grey! Walter presents her to the Samorin. During the journey, Walter's eloquence had prevailed, his sister had yielded to his arguments, and promised to comply with the customs of Malabar. Agalva girds Walter with the sword, but his heart is not perfectly tranquil, till he sees the Emperor furnish

the blushing Emma with the hope-colored girdle, and hears him pronounce the noble benediction—"Be the Mother of Heroes!"

The two strangers being thus naturalized, the Samorin ascends his throne; Walter and Emma are conducted to its footsteps; the herald of the phoenix proclaims them Count and Countess of Mangalore.

"You will not refuse," said Agalva, addressing the Emperor, "to confirm a mark of my gratitude to my deliverer. Behold this cup, the refinement of the Mirza's vengeance converted into it the scull of my lover; be it preserved as a monument of my sufferings.* Enlightened was the mind of my lover, and his soul will rejoice in its future use. This

* The Duchess of Norfolk had the scull of the Earl of Arundel, who died in the Tower, 1595, incased in gold, and kept to exalt her devotion as the relic of a martyr....Pennant's London.

cup shall serve at the grand festival of Samora. Walter and his nephews shall be the cup-bearers of the empire. Out of this cup we will drink—Success to the rights of women !

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 “ are assured, have honored it with their ap-
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 “ British public.”

To pronounce a work *dull* is to give of it a very vague character ; for possibly the dullness lies in the Reviewer, and not in the author. A Reviewer should give the contents of a publication, and then offer his opinion of it ; but it is easier to injure it, by three marks of admiration ! ! !, as a silent enemy may destroy a reputation by a significant shrug.

This is the usual tactic of the Anti-Jacobin Review ; but the writer of this article has carried his rancor still further. To insinuate, that a work is ungrammatically written, is to smother it at its birth ; for it must strike every reader, that a person, ignorant of grammar, should not publish at all. The Reviewer therefore may be a true churchman, but cannot be a friend of truth, as the above grammatical fault, which he has affected with such kindness to correct, is a malicious forgery, and the title of the book, which has been copied verbatim in the other Reviews of the same year, was printed as follows :

LOVE, an Allegory ; to which *are* added several Poems and Translations, &c.

The author was at Weimar, and probably his absence encouraged the Anti-Jacobins to stoop to this manœuvre, which has been but very lately detected. They formed too just an opinion of the merit of their own Review to fear that a copy would find its way to the Continent.

Were the author to prosecute them, he must prove some damage caused by their malevolence; but this he cannot, as only a few copies remain to prove the forgery, should they have the effrontery to deny it. He therefore leaves them to a jury of their peers: let their brother-reviewers declare, whether forgery is a warrantable *ruse de guerre*. Surely "The True Churchman" will not plead the benefit of the clergy.

But, however sanctified, the True Churchman is not infallible, for in reviewing a late publication, "A PICTURE OF VERDUN," he says, "The English prisoners had amongst them some respectable poets. A Chevalier Lawrence wrote the following song, which is alike creditable to his talents and to his principles." And after inserting it, he proceeds, "There is a humorous song, excellent in its kind, by the same hand, which our limits will not allow us to insert." (Anti-Jacobin Review, or True Churchman's Magazine, for September 1810.)

Behold then the same individual a perfect dunce, ignorant of the first rule of syntax, or a respectable poet, just as it may suit the views of the Anti-Jacobin.

The fact is, the liberal ideas, contained in the Allegory, were disagreeable to "The True Churchman." An owl abhors the light. But a true account of the Poem would only have excited the curiosity of the public, he therefore had recourse to a falshood to prevent its circulation. This was a *pia fraud* and (as the Jesuits said, when they procured the assassination of any victim) *Omne ad majorem Dei gloriam*.

The True Churchman imitates those very papists, whom he fulminates on every occasion. In the reign of Maria Theresa, who was governed by true churchmen, a protestant clergyman being benighted in a catholic village of Transylvania, could scarcely find any public-house that would admit him. At length he agreed to lodge in the same room with two peasants, who on his introduction crossed themselves with the greatest devotion. When he began to undress, they beheld him with a mixture of fear and curiosity; but when he had pulled off his stockings, they exclaimed with one voice, "It is not true;" and being pressed, they informed him that their confessors had warned them that all protestant pastors were cloven-footed. The honest countrymen,

discovering that their priests had imposed on them, felt less aversion to the heretic; and perhaps the public, on discovering the imposture of "The Anti-Jacobin," may not find the Allegory unworthy of its notice.

This collection will contain also THE BOSOM FRIEND; of which the Monthly Review (April 1792) judged as follows:

"THE BOSOM FRIEND; in five books. By an Etonian. 1791."

"Those readers, who are little acquainted
 "with the fashionable world, will be surprised to find that this Poem, instead
 "of being, as the title might seem to promise, a panegyric on friendship, is written in praise of a modern article of a lady's
 "dress. The poet, like Mr. Pope in the Rape of the Lock, has bestowed much
 "invention, and many pleasing verses on a trivial subject. The piece bears marks of
 "genius, learning and taste, and which indicate that this Etonian will hereafter
 "make no inconsiderable figure in a higher school."









